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THOUGHTS ON TACTICS

AND

MILITARY ORGANIZATION

TOGETHER WITH AN ENQUIRY INTO THE

POWER AND POSITION OF RUSSIA.

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BY

LIEUT.-COLONEL J. MITCHELL, H. P.

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF WALLENSTEIN."

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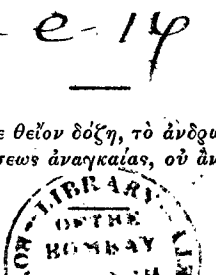
Ἡγούμεθα γὰρ τό τε θεῖον δόξῃ, τὸ ἀνδρώπειόν τε σαφῶς διὰ παντὸς ὑπὸ φύσεως ἀναγκαίας, οὗ ἂν κρατῇ ἄρχειν.

THUCYDIDES, lib. v.



LONDON:

LONGMAN, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.

1838.

"Of the Gods, we think as others; and of men we believe that, by a law of nature or necessity, they will everywhere reign over those whom they are strong enough to subdue."

THUCYDIDES, lib. v. (as Motto.)

LONDON:
PRINTED BY MANNING AND SMITHSON,
IVY-LANE, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

TO

THE SURVIVING OFFICERS

WHO, DURING THE LATE WAR,

SERVED WITH

THE ROYAL REGIMENT,

IN THE

WEST-INDIES, WALCHREN, THE PENINSULA,
FRANCE AND FLANDERS,

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED

BY, THEIR FORMER COMRADE,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE opinions contained in the following pages, differ so widely from the military views of the day, that it may be right, at once, to tell the reader not to expect any repetition of the laudatory strains so often put forward in support of the military institutions and practices of our time and country. The author leaves panegyric to abler hands: he believes that troops are dressed, armed and trained in a manner singularly at variance with the object for which they are raised; that justice has never been done to the force of cavalry, and that the system of granting promotion according to wealth, patronage, or length of service, is as much opposed to the best dictates of humanity as to the best interests of the army: he believes, in fact, that our military institutions have shackled the noblest energies of our soldiers, and he endeavours to expose the evil, and to obtain the remedies so fully within our reach. That we have gained great victories is true: but we have sustained disasters which knowledge might have averted, and our triumphs were purchased at an expense of blood, toil and treasure, that, when the qualities of our men are consi-

dered, leave the value of our institutions far more than questionable: the champion who, with his right arm shackled, should still be so strong and valiant as to come victorious out of a hard-fought battle, would have achieved an easier conquest and saved himself many hard blows, had he brought both his hands to the combat.

All the military nations of the Continent follow, it will be said, the same system of tactics we are here so strongly condemning: but this, though true, proves nothing, as we do not know that their system would necessarily suit us, even if good in itself; for their absolute wisdom in military matters has never yet been very clearly established. It is probable also, that high authorities may be quoted against some of the views contained in this work; but it must always be recollected that, to organize armies, and to lead, in the field, armies already organized, are very different things. An absolute ruler like Napoleon, who was both Sovereign and Commander-in-chief, might have trained his armies at pleasure. The French Emperor made no change, however, in tactics; he only followed the method of his revolutionary predecessors; and employed the old system in a manner, so fraught with blood and crime, as fully to realize whatever the combined efforts of Moloch and Lucifer could possibly have devised. No other general had the power of Napoleon; and Suvaroff, Blucher, Sir John Moore, the Duke of Wellington, were appointed to command armies, over the training of which they

had exercised no control; they were forced to employ the troops in a manner consistent with the principles according to which they had been trained; and sometimes, *perhaps*, agreeably to the opinions which the soldiers themselves entertained of their science and tactics. On what principle any of the officers, here named, would have trained and organized armies, had they been called upon to perform such duties; or how they would have employed such armies, we have no means of knowing. In the following pages we are, at all events, speaking of principles only, and cannot stop to argue with those who would answer us by appeals to the authority of names; for the value of opinion necessarily ceases the moment the power of demonstration begins.

The writer's objects are,—to obtain for the army an efficient system of tactics: men should be provided with good weapons and taught to use them with skill; instead of being left totally untutored in the use of arms, and provided with weapons, some of which cannot be used with skill, others of which, like bayonets, cannot be used at all. He would further, with a view to economy, both of blood and money, wish to see the soldier's condition improved and his station raised in the scale of society: as the rank and dignity of individuals are always, to a certain extent, guarantees for their conduct: and the men of the British army are naturally so deserving and of such excellent dispositions, as to merit every favour that can possibly be shown them: but the present system of rewards and

punishments has not only the blood, but the crimes of thousands to answer for. To ensure these improvements, promotion must, however, be granted according to the merit, and not according to the wealth of the candidates;—in the ranks of war,—in all situations in which power is exercised over the happiness or fortunes of men, chivalrous feeling, high conduct, character and acquirements, must take precedence of money, interest and length of service.

It may be thought that there is not much prospect of seeing these startling changes effected; the author, without being very sanguine, hopes, however, for better things. The papers on which this volume is founded were all, with the exception of the first, printed, with many others by the same hand, in the United Service Journal; and it was the attention with which they were honoured, that suggested the present publication. The articles have all been much enlarged, and some have been entirely written over again, and the author hopes that, coming before the public in this collected, augmented, and as he would fain believe, improved form also, they may tell more forcibly in favour of the cause they were intended to advocate than could be expected from their separate appearance in the pages of a periodical Journal. When the first article on Tactics was published, (in May, 1831,) it contained, in its then shape, all that the writer had any intention of saying on the subject: but the article attracted notice; the writer was encouraged to proceed, till from one step to another, our principal

military institutions were all passed under review. As the officers of the army, and those who take an interest in military affairs, encouraged the work in its progress, the writer hopes they will not forsake the good cause as it approaches completion.

Though true, as stated in the opening chapter of the book, that we have no work on the science of war, it must be added nevertheless, that we have several very valuable military works. Colonel Napier has enriched our literature with the noblest military history existing in a modern language; Colonel Paisley, Sir John Johnes, Sir John May, Capts. Jebb, Mac Auly, O'Brien, have all written, with great ability, on different points of professional science; but we have no work on the art of war generally. We have no book that gives an account of the relative power of the different arms; of the best mode of using and combining the action of Infantry, Cavalry and Artillery; nothing to show what they can effect against each other, singly or collectively; nothing about marches; about the proper modes of acting on level plain, broken ground, behind temporary defences or regular ramparts. All knowledge on these points must come to us by direct inspiration; it is in vain that we look for guides to help us through the path, which is dark and dubious, at the best, and should therefore be illuminated with every possible care. General Whitelock, for instance, did not know that stone walls could resist musket balls and bayonet thrusts: and others have fallen into nearly similar errors, though fortunately upon a smaller scale.

The chapters, on the Relative Power of Fleets and Fortresses, and on the Overland Invasion of India, though not immediately connected with Tactics or Military Organization, were rendered necessary by the inquiry into the Power and Position of Russia. Before that important subject could be entered upon, it was necessary to show, first, that we could not control Russia by unsupported naval armaments; and, secondly, that our Indian possessions were placed far beyond the reach of her military power and ambitious efforts. These points once set to rest, the question was greatly simplified; the real nature of the danger was more clearly discernible, and it was evident that the thunder-cloud threatened Europe and not Asia.

It may possibly be urged against the writer, that party politics should not have been touched upon in a purely professional work; but to show the causes which so fatally retarded the progress of military science, and cost the country such millions of treasure and torrents of blood, it was necessary to trace the evils back to their real sources. Under a constitutional government, like that of Britain, acknowledging only the three estates of King, Lords, and Commons, the army, as a body, can have nothing to do with politics; they are merely the guardians of the lives and properties of their fellow citizens,—*Peltastæ* in the literal sense of the word; but though they have nothing to do with politics, every party in the state takes a different view of the position, duties, and obligations of the army; our military establishments are constantly rendered

subservient to the fancies of influential politicians; they are assailed, altered, abolished, and rebuilt at the dictates of mere party; the best efforts of the military authorities are rendered powerless; the interest of the profession is sacrificed to the interest of individuals, and always, in total forgetfulness that the country and the soldiers must suffer the forfeit of every error.

It was impossible, under these circumstances, to avoid altogether touching on the subject of politics. The writer believes that he has seen disaster, loss and suffering, result from the fatal influence of which he complains, and he states his opinion accordingly, without partiality, favour or affection. As an individual, he owes the Whigs as little as the Tories; and claims, at least, disinterestedness as a politician, having never received, from any man, an obligation equal in value to the fragment of pen with which he is writing.

London, Jan. 1838.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

CAUSES OF THE SLOW PROGRESS OF MILITARY SCIENCE 1

ON TACTICS:

PART I.—ORIGIN AND INEFFICIENCY OF MODERN TACTICS - - - - - - - - - - - 25

II.—COMBAT OF CAVALRY AGAINST INFANTRY - 73

III.—GENERAL RECAPITULATION - - - - - 111

IV.—HOW SHOULD INFANTRY BE TRAINED AND ARMED - - - - - - - - - - 123

ON THE MERIT AND ACTIONS OF FRENCH AND ENGLISH CAVALRY - - - - - - - - - - - 177

ILLUSTRATIONS OF CAVALRY WARFARE - - - - - 201

ON MILITARY COSTUME - - - - - - - - - - 213

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS IN THE BRITISH ARMY 239

ON MILITARY PROMOTION BY PURCHASE - - - - - 261

ON THE RELATIVE STRENGTH OF FLEETS AND FORTRESSES - - - - - - - - - - - - 291

ON THE OVERLAND INVASION OF INDIA - - - - - 305

ON THE POWER AND POSITION OF RUSSIA - - - - 351

CAUSES OF THE SLOW PROGRESS OF MILITARY SCIENCE.

"La guerre est une science couverte de ténebres dans l'obscurité desquelles, on ne marche pas d'un pas assuré: la routine et les préjugés en font la base, suite naturelle de l'ignorance."

MARSHAL SAXE.

ENGLAND may, at all hours, be called upon to wage war in any quarter of the globe; and there is not in the English language, a single work on military science. We have either not reflected on military subjects, or those amongst us who have so reflected, have, for want of encouragement perhaps, kept to themselves the result of their speculations. The military knowledge possessed by individuals must be intuitive, therefore, or it must have been derived from foreign sources, not always very applicable to our wants, and can hardly, under such circumstances, have made any great progress. To be widely and profitably diffused, knowledge must be rapidly communicated from man to man: in the present state of society, this can only be effected by means of the press; and we have not written on the art of war. All the sciences, and all great inventions, were so imperfect at their birth, that we do not, at this day, know the origin from whence the most important are derived: they have been improved and rendered beneficial by the continued efforts of intelligent men, and by being objects of a constant interchange of thought between the able and the enlightened. The science of war has alone

remained what Marshal Saxe termed it a century ago—"a science covered with darkness."

Britain, which has taken so noble a lead in forwarding the progress of every other branch of human knowledge, has done absolutely nothing for the science of arms. Though placed, by its colonies, in contact with every nation of the earth—forced to be on the alert in all quarters of the world, and as often at war in one part as in the other, the country has done nothing to improve the art of war—to facilitate for its soldiers the attainment of victory, and to render the necessary contests less destructive and less burdensome to the nation at large. It was in vain that humanity called for every exertion in the cause—nothing was done: we took up the practices handed over to us by foreigners, without once inquiring how far they were judicious—how far they were adapted to our situation, or suited to the character and genius of our people. And all this apathy is allowed to continue in the face of the well-known maxim which tells us, that readiness for war is the best security for peace: a maxim which the ancients already illustrated, as justly as beautifully, by depicting the Goddess of Wisdom herself armed cap-a-pie.

But if England has produced no work on military science, a great many have been produced in other countries. Owing to obvious causes, which we shall state, the benefit derived from this mass of writing has not, however, been considerable; military knowledge seems to have made little progress, and appears to be at a low ebb when contrasted with just principles evidently applicable to the nature and object of the science. The renewal of letters had scarcely made Europe acquainted with the tactics of the ancients, before the introduction of gunpowder

again threw the subject back into primitive obscurity. Few colonels or field captains read the classics, and those who did naturally concluded, that since the great invention of fire-arms, the ancient science could be of little avail: the idea of applying just original principles to altered circumstances remained totally dormant, and the tactical knowledge of Greece and Rome was overlooked, if not despised. The noise and fire of *bombards*, *bombardelle*, hackbuts, and handguns, completely captivated the imagination of mankind, till, in the end, the augmented force of artillery, and the improved action of musketry, buried everything like science or system beneath a dark canopy of sulphureous smoke, which was no sooner partially dispelled, by the actions and exertions of men of talents and genius, than pedants and Martinets seized upon the science as their own, and, in attempting to polish it up, to their idea of perfection, filed away all that remained of ancient strength and ancient value.

These persons, fancying God's fair world only one vast and level drill ground, thought that they could reduce living men of blood and bone to mere shooting automatons, who, at the will of one, should everywhere parade the earth's surface with mechanical and tactical accuracy, and win battles by the simple jerk of a forefinger. They forgot, however, that the armed automatons had souls which were frequently weak, and appetites which were always strong. They forgot, in fact, that the power of human toil and endurance has narrow bounds, and that in the hour of death and danger soldiers cease to be machines, and become men, shrinking by natural instinct, however brave they may be, from wounds and mutilations, and clinging to life, however miserable that life is sometimes rendered.

The French revolution-war dispelled, in a great measure,

these delusions; for it was soon found that the republican generals contrived to gain battles without any knowledge of the little things on which their adversaries had always laid such mighty stress. A new method of fighting, much farther removed from just tactical principles than the method which the Martinets had brought into contempt, was looked upon as a new science altogether; and as it proved the most successful, it was soon hailed as *la grande science par excellence*. Plain common sense found it, however, as difficult to discover the merits of the new system as of the old. If the old system attempted to reduce the soldier to a mere automaton, the new one reduced him to a mere atom; for its only discoverable principle—the only principle from which it never deviated, was an utter disregard of human life and human suffering.

Frederick II. defended his country against the efforts of Austria, Russia, France, and Sweden, with infantry formed three deep; and who could thus make, at least, some use of their arms. But this ill-trained, ill-armed, and ill-dressed infantry were not only supported by the boldest and best commanded cavalry which Europe had ever seen, but they were led by an absolute sovereign, free from all responsibility, and incomparably the greatest general of his time. They were led against adversaries who, in arms and in training, were rather their inferiors than superiors, and who were, besides, commanded by men of very moderate abilities.* Frederick had, indeed, to

* The Scotchman Laudon, and the Englishman Lloyd, were the two ablest generals in the Austrian army. But the first only arrived at command as the war closed, and the second only commanded small parties and detachments. It is strange that Marshal Keith, the ablest of Frederick's generals, should also have been a British subject; while the British troops, wanting an efficient leader, fought under a foreign commander.

contend against vastly superior numbers, but his great skill in strategy enabled him, though at the head of the smaller armies, to be very generally the strongest on the most important point: he usually effected this by flank movements. It was, therefore, to his great skill and individual position that he owed the success of his arms, and not to any peculiar system of tactics or method of war. The system which he introduced, or perfected rather, was far superior, indeed, to the one which it displaced, and the merit of this was great; but tried by just tactical principles, it was feeble in the extreme, as the result proved, when the master-hand which alone gave it strength, came to be withdrawn.

The generals of the French republic and Napoleon Bonaparte, overran continental Europe with infantry masses twenty-four deep; thus placing twenty-two men out of every twenty-four in a position that prevented them from making any use of their arms, but which left them needlessly exposed to all the fierce and fiery missiles of modern war

Such bodies were hurled on, mass after mass, to victory or destruction as chance directed. When the compact formation was broken, either by the fire of the enemy, the inequalities of the ground, or by other causes, it was not unusual for the whole mass to dissolve itself into swarms of *Tirailleurs*, who, continuing to advance, made up by the individual gallantry of the men and the intelligence of the regimental officers, for the incompetency of their leaders, and the wretchedness of their system: the blood-wasting folly of which, every powder-mill or piece of ordnance, rendered sufficiently apparent. The French cavalry, so highly lauded, acted on principles equally faulty. Heavy-armed and steel-clad horsemen, attacked

in column; they charged at a trot, and resorted more frequently to the use of fire-arms than to the use of the sword—the only real cavalry weapon. But a successful system, like a successful general, is sure to be praised; and the wonderful career of French victory soon extended the French system over continental Europe, and made the world's echoes ring again with the fame of French tactics, French columns, and the infallibility of French leaders.

The thousands of brave men who fell before the iron ranks of the English sufficed not to break this spell. Column after column was struck down; mass after mass was rent and scattered by the mere line-fire of the British infantry, who, though badly trained and armed, were strong in valour and in patriotism; and in some degree also, better trained and armed than their adversaries. But all in vain; no new light was thrown on the science by the human victims sacrificed in these contests. On the contrary, they merely brought those who doubted the excellence of the French system, back to the old system of Frederick II.

After five-and-twenty years of war, we know no more how to ensure success, or calculate results, than we did before: we have enlarged our vocabulary, indeed, but not our science. In the hour of battle, when opposing volcanoes burst forth, when explosion meets explosion, and when volleying peals of musketry add their wild accompaniment to the loud symphony of death, the general of the nineteenth century must, like his predecessors of the eighteenth, hand the reins to Fortune. He may send a little assistance to one point, or support to another,—he may order a flying enemy to be pursued, or he may fix a rallying place for the fugitives of his own

army; but modern science shows him no clear road to victory, and modern tactics prevent an adversary from being fairly assailed and completely overthrown.

This is, however, what historians and other military writers are not very willing to allow. They constantly tell us of an art, or science of war, which has made vast progress in modern times, and by the aid or knowledge of which, mighty things have been achieved in our day. When we ask for proofs of this great science, the theorists point to actions fought and battles gained; but cannot point to a single principle or manœuvre, the application of which rendered their favourite leaders successful. When we follow to their results, the deeply calculated plans and splendid conceptions so eloquently described by modern writers, we find that they led, invariably, to mere front-to-front onsets, in which the bravest troops, or strongest party, proved victorious whenever the Goddess of Fortune was pleased to remain neutral.

But how, it may be asked, has it happened that so important a science,—a science on which the fate of empires and of armies is so often made to depend,—should continue so far in the back-ground as is here asserted? If we cannot, perhaps, assign all the causes that have delayed the progress of military science, we can still assign a number of causes fully sufficient to account for its tardiness. We shall allow a general officer of the highest talents to speak before we venture our humble opinion.

The late General Clausewitz* tells us, in a very able, though lengthy, and often obscure book on War, that "war comes not within the province of the arts and

* A general in the Prussian service lately deceased. His posthumous work, "Vom Kriege," was published at Berlin in 1832.

sciences, but is simply an action of ordinary life; a conflict of great interests that ends in blood, and differs in this last respect only from other conflicts. The principal difference [between art and war] consists in this," says the General, "that war is not deliberate action directed against dead matter or substance, as in the mechanical arts; nor is it deliberate action directed against a living, yet suffering and yielding object, as in the arts intended to influence the minds or feelings of men" [the General terms these ideal arts], "but it is action directed against re-action. How little this kind of action comes within the province of arts and sciences is evident, and it proves how dangerous and detrimental to armies must have been the constant striving to govern them, by laws resembling those to which dead matter is subject. And yet it is exactly after the mechanical arts, that men have attempted to model the art of war."

Without at present asking, whether fencing is not an art, because a duel is an act of ordinary life, we are bound to express our full concurrence in the second part of the General's proposition; it shows a reason, that goes far, to account for the slow progress of military science. Others remain to be added.

It is, and always has been, too much the fashion to say that generals, like poets, must be born such; and that learning and knowledge are but secondary objects to a military man. Let us not listen to these excuses for ignorance, they have cost the cause of humanity too much already; for whatever truth there may be in the assertion, it is not the entire truth; and on partial truth alone no just theory can ever be founded. Mere learning cannot, of course, supply the place of qualities essential to the mili-

tary character, where such qualities are entirely wanting; but it can cultivate and expand the mind, can furnish ideas; and as it tends "to raise the genius and to mend the heart," should never be neglected in a profession depending so much on kind feeling and mental elevation.

If, as the poet says, "the proper study of mankind is man," to no class of men is that study so essential as to all ranks of officers; for a knowledge of war is, in fact, very little more than a knowledge of what men can be brought to perform, and to support in the different situations in which the profession of arms may place them: and what but study can give any one a knowledge of the countless situations in which soldiers, and, above all, British soldiers, may be placed? Or, what but reflection on the known behaviour of men in situations of difficulty, can enable the most gifted individual to form an estimate of what may be expected from them under similar, novel, or more trying circumstances? Was it an intuitive knowledge of the Alps, that enabled Hannibal to describe those mountains to the terrified Carthaginians, in that incomparable address which shamed a whole army out of their fears? Or, was it the mere study of the rules and regulations, that taught Cæsar how to quell a wild and raging mutiny by a single word? From Alexander to Frederick, all great leaders, all those who have shed a lustre on the profession, have been men of learning and acquirements: authority may sell rank at pleasure, and delegate power to any one; but, we may rest assured that, in the present state of society, and in the present complicated state of the art of war, no one can do justice to the command, even of a regiment or company, without being a man of cultivated mind and understanding.

Military manœuvres and the combinations of war are, in themselves, extremely simple; but they depend upon such an endless train of complicated casualities that—unless when chance only is to be relied on—very extensive knowledge is required to project and carry even the simplest into effect. When once within reach of the enemy, a bold onset is probably worth all the science yet known in the world; but how to come well prepared, within reach of the enemy; how to nerve the arm, and sharpen the sword that is to strike the blow; how to select the time and place for striking;—these are points that can only be learned by reflection, founded on the knowledge, indispensable to every commander who would take a full view of the circumstances bearing upon his situation.

If we are right in this statement, a military man, to do justice to his profession, must possess a concentrated essence of general information; tactics, and a knowledge of human nature forming the principal ingredients. Yet is there no attempt made to call forth knowledge or encourage professional application; and though neither knowledge nor application are actually proscribed by rules and regulations, the chances are that, in the British army at least, they would in general be more injurious than beneficial to the possessor; for, where so many officers rise to rank and station by the mere force of wealth and influence, there will always be ignorant and incapable men among the number, more ready to check, than to forward, the advancement of inferior officers possessing higher attainments.

That many men have risen to rank, have become generals, and even victorious commanders, without possessing knowledge or talents of any kind, proves absolutely nothing. If two armies are once fairly engaged, it is pretty certain that

one of the contending parties will beat the other; but success does not, of itself, constitute the victorious commander a great general. Oppose two bad chess players to each other, and though one of the two will, no doubt, win the game, success alone will not make him a great player. This is saying nothing of the influence which the number and quality of the troops, and the fancies of fortune, exercise over the events of war.

The imperfect manner also, in which military history has, for the most part, been written, is another cause of the slow progress of military science. Military historians have generally been satisfied with merely relating events: and, unacquainted with war, or wanting ability, they have too often failed to trace the various and complicated causes of the results which they described. Thus a superficial view of every campaign, war, or battle, gives rise to new and fashionable doctrines, that are followed and upheld till some melancholy and unexpected catastrophe lays bare the feeble foundations on which they had been raised. For a long time fortresses were looked upon as the safest defence of empires, till, all at-once, we saw the strongest and the best of them, fall without offering the slightest resistance. The consequence was, that it became the fashion to undervalue them. Yet Badajos twice foiled the Duke of Wellington's army; and the castle of Burgos changed the fate of a campaign. Mantua and Dantzig arrested, for months, the progress of Napoleon, and Silistria alone suspended, for a year, the fate of Turkey. On the other hand, the once dreaded triple barrier of French fortresses produced no effect whatever during the campaigns of 1814 and 1815. It is the same with field-works. Gustavus Adolphus's celebrated leaguers at Swed, Werben, and Nurenberg;

Frederick's camp at Bunzelwitz; the Duke of Wellington's lines at Torres Vedras; General Jackson's entrenchments at New Orleans, show how much benefit may, at times, be derived from such works. But we suspect that they are rather out of fashion just now, and military history is ready with a hundred good examples, to prove that they are absolutely worthless.

But the greatest drawback to the progress of military science, arose from the circumstance of its having, on the continent at least, been exclusively a royal and noble science. Kings and princes were generals and leaders of armies; they improved as far as their views went, but no further; and who dared to see beyond them, or to question the justness of what they deemed right. Bülow, in his work on Tactics, says that, "military writings which are found to contain truth, novelty, and originality, or to bear proofs of genius and talent, invariably exclude their author from all promotion and employment, whether civil or military." And the fortunes of the most eminent writers of the class, seem fully to bear out the strange assertion. Folard and Puysegur fell into disgrace, and were ordered to discontinue writing. Marshal Saxe was also out of favour when he wrote. Berenhorst, of whom the present writer avows himself an humble follower, left the Prussian army in 1762, a year before the peace of Hubertsburgh, and, as it was therefore conjectured, in some sort of disgrace, having during the course of Frederick's three wars, attained only to the rank of captain. General Lloyd was persecuted in the latter years of his life, by the British government, who seized his papers, fearing, perhaps, that some more truth might come to light. Bülow died in prison, for having published an account of the campaign of Austerlitz.

When in confinement, he was told of the disasters of Jena; and replied by asking, "What else could be expected when officers were thrown into gaol, and old women placed at the head of armies?" The unhappy fate of this writer, who was a man of great genius, though rendered egotistical, perhaps, by persecution and oppression, furnishes a valuable illustration to the military history of our age. It accounts for the constant tendency to praise, and the total absence of all critical inquiry which has distinguished the military authors of the continent; and shows how sensitively those were alive to the mere chances of blame, whom the grossest, and most ridiculous flattery could neither displease nor offend.

It was only in times when men of great military genius were at the head of affairs, that military science made any progress; and all our improvements date, in fact, from kings and princes; from Gustavus Adolphus, the Prince of Orange, the Prince of Dessau, Charles XII. and Frederick II. How jealous the last-named monarch was on the subject of military improvement, is well known; and Berenhorst gives an amusing account of the manner in which the most trifling amendments had to be thrown in his way, in order that he might himself fall upon the discovery, and retain all the honour of the original suggestion. What regular progress could any science make under such circumstances?

Victorious commanders, also, were generally looked upon as great commanders; so that their views and opinions were received as good and established maxims. How much the conquerors were indebted for success to the superior quality of their troops, to the ignorance of their adversaries,—to night, chance, darkness, and fortune,—were things never taken into account. Providence was

the only ally from whom the victors acknowledge to have received aid on the day of battle, and whatever had not been visibly effected by its all-ruling hand,—for the world are more sceptical as to the actions of Providence than of generals,—could only be ascribed to the unsupported skill, science, and valour of the triumphant leaders themselves. The vanquished, if allowed to speak,—which was not often the case*,—had possibly not much to say; and we are unable to quote a single work written by an unsuccessful commander that throws a ray of light on the general science of war. How then, to repeat our previous question, could that science make any progress?

The profession of arms also, though, no doubt, favourable to the development of high, honourable feeling, is, strange to say, unfavourable to the advancement of professional science. Officers enter the service at an age when they are more likely to adopt existing opinions than to form opinions of their own. They grow up in carrying into effect orders and regulations founded on these received opinions: they become, in some measure, identified with existing views, till, in the course of years, the ideas thus gradually imbibed get too firmly rooted to be either shaken or eradicated by the force of argument or reflection. In no profession is the dread of innovation so great as in the army.

* It is now well known that General Fink could have cleared himself from all blame respecting the surrender at Maxem. The evidence mostly consisting of the king's own orders and letters, is still in the hands of his family; but Frederick was his accuser, and who dared to vindicate at the expense of the all-powerful? Napoleon's attempt to throw on Marshal Grouchy the blame of the defeat at Waterloo, is altogether unworthy of notice, but would the Marshal have ventured to publish his defence had Napoleon remained on the throne of France?

No sooner is an officer looked upon as theorist and innovator than he is set down as an unhappy person, who ought, with all speed, to be consigned to the care of compassionate friends. The alarmists entirely forget that, since the world began, no science ever made a step of progress except by the aid of theory, which looks, tries and reflects, whilst practice only follows blindly in the beaten path, without considering what is right, or what is wrong. In this respect some improvement has of late years taken place in Germany. General Clausewitz held, it seems, a high command previous to his death; and Von Kanitz, another writer of great ability, was Prussian ambassador at Constantinople during the Russian-Turkish war: many officers of rank and talents contribute not only to the Prussian, but to the Austrian Military Journal.

In this country, though military subjects were always as open to discussion as others, military science was certainly not encouraged. Before the just principles of constitutional government were well understood, and as long as the relative powers of the three estates of the realm were ill defined, the defenders of popular rights entertained some natural dread of a standing army, entirely at the disposal of the crown; and therefore laboured to show the danger that might arise from what was generally termed an unconstitutional force. More than a century has now elapsed since all danger of this kind has passed away. But though the cause is removed, the effect remains; nor can it be expected, that every gentleman should perceive the change, brought about by a single century in the situation of a country. Military tyranny also forms a good theme for declamation; and the expense of maintaining a defensive force, offers a constant subject for the

laudable exertions of political economists, who strive to merit a worthy kind of popularity by representing the army as the cause of every oppressive and unpopular tax levied upon the country. How the account would stand, were the army disbanded to-morrow, and the country relieved from the expense of maintaining them, is a point carefully kept out of sight; even by the few patriots of this class, who are capable of looking at both sides of a question.

It has also been too much the fashion to assert that, as a naval nation, Britain could easily dispense with an army. The persons who advanced such doctrines had never, of course, seen a weather-cock veer about upon a church steeple, or the most ordinary capacity must have told them that no spot on the globe, large or small, could be defended by fleets alone. Yet assertions of this kind, advanced by grave legislators in the senate, caused the army to be neglected without causing the condition of the navy to be improved.

The manner in which promotion is granted tends likewise to retard the progress of military science. In the British army wealth and interest are the only certain ladders to preferment: they invariably lead to rank; whereas military merit is so totally disregarded, that it would be difficult to say what is generally understood by the term. The blame of this must not be charged against the military administration: the evil results from the entire system; from the military opinions now prevalent, and from the situation of the army in this country; a situation by which the welfare of the profession is constantly made subservient to the views of interested politicians.

It may further be said, that the British army is hardly

commanded by military men. A civil department of the state, at the head of which is a minister of the crown, generally a civilian, is the ostensible and responsible authority presiding over the military affairs of the nation; though there is not a single military question on which a non-military man can possibly decide without the advice of some experienced officer. The head of the department must, therefore, if he wishes to do justice to the cause, be guided by the directions of his subordinates, and submit to a dictation not always, perhaps, very palatable. No civilian can decide on the number of men required for the service of the country; because he cannot know how much, or how little, troops are capable of effecting; nor how many men are required for the defence of any one post or colony. He cannot know the number or rank of officers required for the command of the troops:* he can-

* By what principle is this matter, of the number of officers required for the command of troops, now decided? The Romans had about 60 officers,—a legate, 5 or 6 tribunes, and 55 centurions,—to a legion; that is, to 4000 or 5000 men, being an officer to about 70 privates. A British battalion on the war establishment, has to about 800 men, 44 officers, beside paymaster, quarter-master, and medical officers; that is, an officer to about 20 privates: nor is the number too great in the present state of things. On the peace establishment such a battalion has 32 officers. Then there are the staff officers; head-quarter staff, division and brigade staff, garrison staff, adjutant, and quartermaster-general's staff.

A ship of the line, again, with a crew equal in strength to an ordinary battalion, has, in general, only seven or eight commissioned officers; or an officer to about eighty men. The question, then, is, why do the best of modern troops require so many more officers than the ancients, and why do British soldiers require so many more officers than British sailors? The answer is anything but flattering to modern soldiership.

The Roman soldiers, were soldiers, in the real sense of the word, and understood every part of their duty. Cæsar says of them, in his

not tell how soon troops should be relieved, nor how soon troops returned from foreign services may again be fit to leave the country.

account of the battle fought against the Nervii, "*His difficultatibus duæ res erant subsidio, scientia atque usus militum.*" A judge like Cæsar might have praised the bravery of some of the moderns, but he would probably have smiled at their pretensions to science. To the Romans the profession of arms was a road to honour and distinction; and few officers were necessary for the command of men so trained and situated.

As to the navy, though British sailors are not much better treated than British soldiers, there are still, in every ship, a great proportion of real seamen—men bred to their profession from infancy, who understand every part of duty—can reef, steer, handle a rope, an oar, and work a gun with equal facility. The warrant officers of the navy must also be taken into account; they are intelligent prime seamen, fully equal to all naval duties, except those for which scientific attainments are required. Comparatively few officers are therefore necessary in the navy; particularly so, as the crews of ships are seldom much detached, and as the wooden walls keep the inmates pretty well together, and under inspection.

A modern soldier, on the other hand, only knows his place in the ranks; he can perform the manual and platoon exercise, pipe-clay belts and pull a trigger. If we add to these accomplishments a knowledge of guard and sentinel duty, his acquirements are told; his professional ideas extend no farther; and if he thinks, he keeps his thoughts to himself; not even skill in arms is looked for, nor is good conduct rewarded. An old age of poverty and distress, is the only lot to which the British veteran must look forward; and men so trained and situated, can be rendered efficient only by the guidance of a numerous corps of officers. The non-commissioned officers of the army are men of the highest merit; but the general system naturally confines their sphere of action. The nature of modern warfare also, which sweeps over every kind of ground, renders a number of officers necessary; but it is, nevertheless, evident that well trained soldiers would require fewer officers than untrained soldiers; and modern soldiers are only drilled, but not trained. The simple idea of raising the condition of the soldier, so as to admit of more being demanded from him individually, so as to enable the few to perform the duty of the many, is still immeasurably above the concep-

A civilian should not even decide on the dress of the army, because he does not know what troops have to undergo in the field and in tropical climates. And though it might be supposed that most gentlemen could determine on the quantity of food necessary for a soldier, yet, even on this simple point, the decisions have not evinced proofs of great sagacity. A pound of meat, bones included, together with a pound and a half of bread, sounds, no doubt, vastly well for a daily ration. But a march of twenty miles, with the heavy arms and appointments a soldier has to carry; or a four-and-twenty hours' guard, are keen sharpeners of the appetite to men in the full vigour of life. And the two pounds and a half of food, even when vegetables can be added to the amount, would weigh but little, when compared to the quantity consumed at breakfast, luncheon, dinner, tea and supper, by the generality of legislators who *bivouac* on beds of down; whose heaviest exercise is the drive or canter, recommended for the laudable object of improving the appetite and restoring digestion.

A civil department may audit military accounts; but the auditors of such accounts must not transgress the limits of that particular duty: for men may be good and useful accountants, and very indifferent judges of military affairs. It may not be easy for gentlemen to abstain altogether from interfering with measures for which they are to be officially responsible, and such self-denial should not, perhaps, be expected from them; but it is more evident and of more importance, that no one should attempt to legislate

tion of the enlightened economists, who, to the nation's cost, have so long been the real directors of our military affairs. Even money, the idol of these men, seems to lose value in their eyes, unless it is saved at the expense of British lives; to save both men and money would appear to afford no gratification whatever.

for the army, without knowing the duties to which a soldier is exposed. And let any one say, who has ever seen a campaign, whether there is a line of study or process of thought known to men by which the children of peace can arrive at a knowledge of scenes so terrible, trying, and so different from everything that civil life presents. How can gentlemen, brought up in the lap of ease, surrounded with all the luxuries fancy may covet, who only know toil and danger by name, and the world by having rolled pleasantly along, in a travelling carriage, from Calais to Naples, legislate for soldiers—for men who are to act, and who are liable to suffer also, in situations of which the legislators cannot form the slightest conception? Can the votaries of pleasure,—can even men of letters, when unacquainted with military duty, form any idea of the heart-and-soul-crushing tedium of garrison and colonial life? Can gentlemen from Almack's or the Stock Exchange know the workings of the dull, joyless, and hopeless existence to which the soldier is tied down by the iron rules of an ungrateful service? The hope that comes to all, comes not to him. He sees the dreary and changeless prospect that lies before him, and is, in something like Prometheus, chained to the rock, while all that is good and generous in his nature becomes the vulture that tears his breast asunder.

As if such institutions had not, of themselves, been sufficiently injurious, an influential party in the state strove, from the very commencement of the late war, to suppress in the country, all military genius and feeling. Every exertion was made to damp the hopes and lower the character of the profession; and measures tending to crush all military aspiration and talent, were constantly forced upon

the government of the country, who, as a natural consequence, cramped and limited the military administration in every direction. The baneful effects of these unworthy exertions, still so laudably continued, accompanied the army on every march, and in every battle; they were felt in prosperity as well as in adversity. Failures were experienced for want of the knowledge which factious power had withheld; and for want of that just confidence, which falsehood, insult, and calumny had destroyed. And when by gallantry and devotion, unparalleled in the history of nations and of wars, success again rallied round the old victorious standard of England, it was purchased at an expense of blood and treasure, from the recollection of which, the mind even now shrinks back with dismay. The bone-house of Morat would sink into absolute insignificance, could the bones of the British soldiers, sacrificed to the evil counsels of selfish politicians, be collected and piled up, in awful illustration of the services rendered to the country and to humanity by this unhappy class of modern patriots.

Once deprive the military profession of the halo that surrounds it; destroy all those energising sentiments and feelings—the result of illusion perhaps—that still attach themselves in the breast of the soldier, and of the better part of mankind, to the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war," and there is an end to the army. Take bright honour out of the scale,—extinguish that aspiration after fame and distinction,—that longing for danger and the boundless elasticity it confers, and before which obstacles vanish that would make mere calculation shrink back appalled,—and the profession of arms becomes one of unrewarded suffering and danger, and the most ungrateful to

which men can devote themselves. Every effort should be made to elevate the soldier's condition: but every exertion is used to lower his station and narrow his prospects.

What is to be expected from degraded armies, destitute alike of honour, discipline, and loyalty, may be learned from the late events in Spain, Portugal, and Italy. Incapable of facing an enemy, and without character sufficient to give force to the laws of their own country, the troops of these states only encourage foreign aggression by their cowardice, and domestic anarchy by their insolence, rapacity, and insubordination. And the nations, wanting the elements of which efficient armies can alone, be formed, are left a prey to tyranny: certain to become the slaves of successive factions, or successive despots. The records of mankind furnish one continued proof of the melancholy fact, that arms alone have been able to protect men, whether living in great or in small communities, from the oppression and rapacity of those who were strong enough to subdue or despoil them. Turn the blood-stained page of history which way we will,—let sophistry misrepresent, and party spirit falsify, still is this the great and melancholy truth that everywhere presents itself, and naturally calls aloud to arms.

The last age witnessed the reign of Catharine the abhorred; and saw her constant aggressions on unoffending Turkey, and the dismemberment of Poland; as we have seen the wars "for power, for plunder, and extended rule" carried on by the different demagogues of France, from the men of blood, who, governed by the guillotine, down to the vain man of little mind who reigned by the sword. The same spirit of ambition, spoil, or aggrandizement that deluged the

East and West with blood,—brought the French to Moscow, and Tartars to the banks of the Seine,—is still in full existence; for human nature is still unchanged. And though it is the duty of all men, to labour for the improvement of the species, we must not blind ourselves to our faults, while we remain imperfect, as such blindness would only retard the progress of amendment; and the idea, however laudable, of rendering all the children of earth supremely virtuous and forbearing, is sufficiently gigantic to show that ages, at least, must elapse before the most sanguine can calculate on its being effected.

Neither in ancient nor in modern times has the schoolmaster made a single step of progress, except by holding on at the skirts of the soldier's coat. He is now, it seems, to do greater things; and when he shall have eradicated from the human breast the passions that unsheath the sword, we may then disarm in peace and safety. But until the golden age shall again return,—till love and harmony shall again hold exclusive sway over the world, we are bound to be prepared against every emergency. A single glance, indeed, at the noble services rendered by disciplined armies, shows how important their efficiency must be to all enlightened nations. Regular armies gave the first check to the barbarism of the middle ages; and it was under their protection alone that arts, sciences, commerce, and industry grew up and extended in Europe; and it is only under the shade of arms that the arts of peace can continue to flourish and to prosper. Loyal and well-disciplined armies form the best protectors of freedom: they shield it from tyranny on one side, and prevent it from degenerating into anarchy on the other: they con-

stitute the basis on which rest the social institutions of modern times, and are the guardians of national honour, tranquillity, and independence. It is now only at the expense of humanity which they uphold, and of civilization which they defend, that armies can be oppressed, injured, or neglected.

ON TACTICS.

PART I.

"C' était de tous les arts le plus funeste, mais celui qu'il fallait le plus perfectionner."—VOLTAIRE.

ORIGIN AND INEFFICIENCY OF MODERN TACTICS.

LEOPOLD OF ANHALT-DESSAU, the founder of the present system of tactics, was one of the ablest officers who served under Prince Eugene, during the war of the Spanish succession. At this period the musket and bayonet had already displaced the lance from the ranks of the European infantry; and Leopold, a direct and clear-headed soldier, soon perceived that every thing was effected by firing; that close combats never took place; and that those who held out longest, showed most resolution, and overwhelmed their adversaries with the greatest number of musket-balls, were pretty sure to remain masters of the field. The lesson was not lost upon him, and when placed at the head of the Prussian army by his brother-in-law, Frederick William, the father of Frederick the Great, he immediately set about giving effect to these tactical views. The king supported him most cordially, for he had, on his part, made some pretty just political observations; and saw clearly enough that the power and influence of European states

depended entirely on money and soldiers, and that diplomacy was effectual, exactly in proportion to the number of rank and file ready in the back ground, to support its protocols. He was besides a martinet, a military dilettante, fond of military show and *spectacle;* but as he was by nature penurious, and sovereign only of a very poor country, he was obliged, in order to have many soldiers, to have them at a cheap rate.

In the early part of the eighteenth century, the rulers of Europe had already secured a pretty firm hold of the reins of government, and on the continent the power of princes was altogether absolute. A rigorous conscription was therefore, easily established in Prussia: it furnished one-half of the army; the other half, in order that too many hands might not be taken from agriculture and the pursuits of industry, was made up of tall and good-looking foreigners, enlisted, or too frequently kidnapped rather, into the service. The men thus supplied, were powdered and dressed with as much show as was consistent with the king's parsimonious disposition. They were drilled to excess, almost from sunrise to sunset, and withal most unmercifully flogged; for along with his new system of tactics, Leopold had introduced a new and rigorous system of subordination into the service: and the stick, with which the Roman centurions had so liberally visited the backs of their soldiers, re-appeared with augmented vigour, in the cane of the Prussian corporal. The natural docility of the people, the quantity of suffering that a man will support when he sees others suffer along with him, the considerations which the soldiers enjoyed over the civilians, tended, with many other circumstances, to alleviate the greater evils of these tactical efforts; and the army thus

forced into existence, soon surpassed, in strictness of discipline, uniformity of dress, and accuracy of movement, everything of the kind which the world had before witnessed. It became the universal model; and in the tactical views of the Prince of Anhalt, and in the political views of his master, we already find the foundation on which all the armies of Europe were gradually formed. The prince's tactical views went no farther than to secure combined action, for the purpose of obtaining a rapid and simultaneous fire of musketry; the moral and physical qualities of the soldiers were never thought of; individual activity and skill in arms was as little attended to; the sole aim was to augment the number of shots that could be fired in a minute; and hence the idea of the shooting automaton to which martinets so long strove to reduce the infantry soldier. The cavalry was entirely neglected in the first Prussian army; for Leopold knew nothing of cavalry action.

In addition to the Prince's tactical views, came the King's military predilections and political opinions, which required that large armies should be supported, while his parsimony required that they should be supported at the least possible expense; and hence the drilled paupers in martial uniforms, so long a stigma on the humanity of modern rulers and legislators,—a stigma, indeed, that is yet far from being effaced. How to feed, clothe, and maintain soldiers at the lowest rate, compatible with the bare existence of men, became a regular science; in the study of which the governments of Europe vied with each other in mean and ignoble zeal, and with a total disregard to the sufferings inflicted on the unrewarded and toil-worn victims of their dishonourable and short-sighted policy. The idea that a comparatively small number of bold, frank, and active men,

skilful in the use of arms, and excited to exertions by good pay, good treatment, and the prospect of honourable rewards, would effect far more in such a profession than the unhappy myriads trained and maintained on the Prussian system, has found little favour with the military authorities of modern times; and the brilliant victories occasionally achieved, by all the principal armies of Europe, have only tended to confirm the belief which each entertained of the excellence of its own military institutions. The loss at which victory had been purchased was overlooked: the defeats sustained were forgotten: philosophy was not allowed to teach by example, and the drill-sergeant remains to this day, the only official instructor in military science.

Having thus traced the origin of the system of tactics still followed, with slight modifications, by all the armies of Europe, we must next proceed to investigate its strength and efficiency. We must ascertain whether it rests on a firm and stable basis, or trusts more for success to the fears that can be excited in the minds of an enemy, than to results which can be fairly commanded by the employment of modern arms. And after a century of blind submission, it is time that such an inquiry should be made; we must tear away the lion's hide which general opinion has so long cast over this

> "Pagod thing of sabre sway,
> With front of brass and feet of clay:"

and, having done so, we may, perhaps, be surprised to find how little of power and substance will remain when all that is shadowy and ideal has been removed. As such views must be supported by immediate proof, in order to escape condemnation, on the ground of being too much at variance with received opinion to deserve any serious attention, we

shall enter at once upon the inquiry. For greater clearness we shall begin by explaining the sense in which it is here intended to use the word tactics and strategy; as no two writers have in our time, agreed about the exact meaning of either; a fact which already tells against modern pretension, for no science ever made any great progress so long as its most important technical terms remained vague and undefined.

By tactics is understood the science that instructs us in the choice, power, effect, and combination of arms. It is the science that shows how the individual soldier is to be trained; how the many are to be drawn up for mutual support, and for the purpose of using their arms to the best advantage; it teaches how lines, columns, and squares are formed and moved; how fronts are changed, augmented, or diminished according to circumstances; and how order, with a readiness for action, is preserved in marching. Tactics, in fact, is the science which instructs thousands to execute the commands of the one with exact and simultaneous uniformity; and includes everything that is, or should be, taught on the drill-ground, in order to render the soldier, whether acting individually or in mass, as formidable a combatant as may be consistent with his moral and physical powers.

Strategy, from the Greek word *στρατήγία*, skill in the art of commanding armies, means the art of marching with divisions, detachments, or with entire armies. It is the art or science of advancing, retiring, turning the flank, or cutting off the communication of an enemy; taking advantage of localities, fortifying posts, choosing positions, or effecting the passage of rivers. Strategy is the art of employing the tactical soldier to the best advantage against

the enemy; and, therefore, presupposes in the strategist a perfect knowledge of tactics; it is generalship, in fact, and includes of course what has lately been termed the science of battles.

Having seen what should be the object of a perfect system of tactics, let us now consider how far modern science attains that object, and how far, as regards ourselves, it does justice to the qualities which we claim for the people of these islands.

The modern science of tactics teaches the soldier his position under arms, his facings, and marching; and it enables a commander to give to any number of men a uniform and simultaneous impulse and direction. But it contributes nothing to develope or increase the personal strength, energy, and activity of the soldier, from whom, of all men, the most active exertions are demanded; and not only must its exclusive use of the musket and bayonet be questioned, but it does not even instruct the soldier in the skilful use of those arms, and leaves him consequently destitute of that confidence in his mode of fighting, which is the surest forerunner of victory. Our present system of tactics is, in point of principle, and with few variations in detail, exactly what Prince Leopold of Dessau introduced into the Prussian army about a century ago; it teaches men to act together, and is very well so far as that goes; but it is still far behind the Roman system, which not only taught men to act together, but to act boldly and energetically. That system, which led to the conquest of the known world, developed in men of rather small stature a degree of personal strength that enabled them to perform marches and to construct works which astonish us even at this day, and rendered them, above all, so confident and

skilful in the use of arms, that they never met their match in equal combat.

And why do we remain so far behind the Romans? Is a musket easier to wield than a hasta? Are modern soldiers taken from a class of men more inured to athletic exercises than the ancients? Or are the toils and difficulties of modern war inferior to those the ancients had to contend with? Verily we think not. The cause of our inferiority must, therefore, be sought for, in the opinion entertained by tacticians of the excellence of their art; for no mere acknowledgment of its difficulties could have kept it stationary for such a length of time. Let us try that boasted excellence, therefore, and see what are the destructive powers possessed by an art, the object of which is destruction itself. They will probably be found less formidable than might at first be suspected.

Supposing that 20,000 French were killed or wounded at Waterloo, and allowing 5000 of these to have fallen by the fire of the artillery and the sabres of the cavalry, it leaves 15,000 to the share of the infantry; and reckoning the latter at 30,000 only, though the number present was greater, it required an entire day's hard fighting, before the 30,000 had disabled 15,000 adversaries: that is, all the exertion of two men during an entire day only brought down one enemy!!! Let not the reader here think of two fencers, who, by equal skill and courage foil each other's exertions; there is no such thing as parrying a musket-ball when properly aimed, nor is there any defensive power in modern armies, beyond what they derive from their offensive strength; for, with modern arms all fighting is purely offensive. The above estimate of the efficiency of modern tactics may, indeed, be considered as highly over-

rated; because it applies only to the most sanguinary battles fought during the war, such as those of Marengo, Talavera, Borodino, and others; but by no means to actions of minor note. At Roliça only a few hundred French were put *hors-de-combat;* and at Vimiera 16,000 British only killed and wounded 2000 French, after what was called a smart action.

Now, we are allowed on all hands to be more able-bodied men than the French, and illiberal as it may sound in these liberal days, we are also individually a more active and resolute people. The army that fought at Vimiera was composed of as fine men as ever left England; so that we may take it for granted that they were, on an average, superior to the men of the French army. Let us suppose, then, for a moment, that both parties had, by mutual consent, divested themselves of their arms and tactics, and fairly fought it out with no other aid than natural strength and courage; does it not follow as a matter of course, that the 16,000 stronger, must have so pounded the 14,000 weaker men, as to have rendered the latter totally incapable of impeding the progress of the former towards Lisbon? If so, tactics, instead of strengthening the strong in proportion to their strength, must be something that principally favours the weak; an exceeding good reason, one would think, why the strong should look twice at the system before they adopt and follow it with blind adoration.

That this system made us victorious, proves nothing, until it is shewn that success was always the most decisive, and attended with the least possible loss. But twenty-five years of dubious war, the Convention of Cintra, and the lists of killed and wounded, which were, at times, not

much inferior to those of the vanquished enemy, silence all appeals to general results. Achilles would have been formidable even with the arms of Thersites, but it was only with the Vulcanian arms suited to his strength and courage, that the goddess-born became invulnerable and invincible: it is even thus with British soldiers; they are as formidable as men can be with the present system of tactics, but it is only by a system capable of doing justice to their energy and resolution, that, like Pelides rising in his strength, their full power of action can be displayed.

Having shewn what is the destructive power possessed by modern infantry, when contending against those who are about their equals in point of science, let us inquire what they can effect when opposed to men who have followed a more energetic mode of acting, or when contending against enemies who, by accident or design, have evaded the only strong point of modern tactics, and struck at one of its ninety-nine weak sides. The result will not be very flattering to the "king-making" science.

At Prestonpans, 2000 Highlanders, armed only with broad-swords and targets, overthrew at the very first onset nearly 3000 British infantry, and completed their defeat in less than twenty minutes. The same was the case at Falkirk: and even at Culloden, every point of the line which the Highlanders reached in their charge was completely overthrown. As we may be told that the infantry of 1745 was not equal to that of the present day, and as some of the persons making such an objection could probably not point out the difference, we shall ourselves shew in what it consisted. The infantry in 1745 could neither move nor form with the rapidity of modern infantry; they used wooden ramrods, that during a quick and protracted

fire were liable to break; and they fought three deep, as all continental armies fight to this day. But in every other respect they were trained on the same principles, and fought exactly in the same manner as we do now; nor did the defeats above stated, result from the wooden ramrods or from any tardiness of movement; for the king's troops were drawn up and formed when assailed by the Highlanders, and a charge could leave no time for more than one or two vollies. Though Lowlanders, we are proud of having worn the tartan, and we love the mountaineers, but we cannot claim for them any superiority of personal courage over the English: "no men of women born" can make such a claim; nor are they generally considered equal to the Southerons in point of strength; and, as science was entirely out of the question in these front-to-front onsets, their victories can only be ascribed to a superior and more energetic mode of fighting, and to the skilful use of more efficient weapons.

That the king's troops were ultimately victorious at Culloden, proves nothing in favour of their tactics; for not only were they vastly superior in numbers, but they were aided by a succession of faults on the part of the Highlanders that sets all speculation utterly at defiance. The rebels had made a long and fatiguing night-march towards Nairn, and back again; they had been without food on the previous day, and were without provisions on the morning of the battle; they had neither cavalry nor artillery worth noticing; and though their retreat was perfectly open, though there were strong positions all around, and reinforcements on the march to join them, they yet drew up on the open heath of Culloden to fight an enemy nearly double their number (nine to five), and

well provided both with cavalry and artillery. Where is the general, who, with the best drilled soldiers to back the pride of modern science, would, on level ground, have ventured to engage the overwhelming superiority of regular troops these poor mountaineers so fearlessly encountered, and whom their good claymores would, perhaps, have overcome, had the commanders been at all worthy of the men? But, as if the faults that led to the battle had not, of themselves, been sufficient to ensure defeat, the battle itself completed the measure of all imaginable follies.

The clans, instead of making immediate use of their own formidable and only mode of fighting, remained for upwards of an hour, perfectly inactive under the heavy and discouraging fire of the king's artillery; and when, after sustaining an immense loss, they did advance, the charge was but partially made even by the first line, the second and third taking no share whatever in the action, and leaving their comrades who had been successful entirely unsupported. The prince too, with the feebleness of spirit that distinguished him, and which was so ill-suited to his enterprise, remained perfectly inactive, forgetting that the second line is no place for him who would win a crown at sword's point. Had he known how to do justice to the qualities of his followers, and had he, as in duty bound, led the charge sword-in-hand, not a man of his army would have remained behind; and, independently of the chances of victory such conduct would have given him, the battle, if lost, would have been lost with honour, and the loss such a contest must have inflicted on the king's troops would, at least, have put all serious pursuit out of the question.

The idea of conquering victorious and all-powerful England at the head of a few thousands of half-armed

mountaineers, seems now something more than ridiculous: and yet it is really difficult to say what the result might have been, if the Highlanders had followed up the victory of Falkirk with vigour and celerity.

Their army was then at its greatest height in point of numbers,—they were elated with success,—and their enemies depressed by constant defeat: neither the Scotch Lowlanders nor the people of England took any active share in the contest; and the Irish rather favoured the adventurer. A rapid return into England at the head of a more numerous and victorious army, would have dismayed the adherents of the house of Hanover, and inspired the partisans of the old dynasty with a degree of confidence, which the previous unsupported advance and quick retreat from Derby could not call forth, so that the invaders would have had everything in their favour, and the English army only to contend with. That army was not numerous: it was probably as indifferent to the cause as the rest of the nation; there was no leader capable of inspiring it with enthusiasm, and worse than all, it had been defeated in every encounter, and in a manner too that could not fail to convince both parties of the decided superiority of the Highland mode of fighting. The mountaineers indeed, were in the highest degree confident, and feared no odds whatever: and men, whose confidence results not from mere vanity, nor from an ignorant undervaluing of their enemies, but from a just appreciation of their own daring and energetic mode of warfare, may be considered, when justice is done to them, as pretty nearly invincible. Had a man like Charles XII. led such soldiers, he would have fought the battle for the crown of England, not at Culloden but on Hounslow Heath, where, in the person of

George II. he would have encountered no unworthy competitor. But Charles Edward was unequal to such an undertaking; he retired when he should have advanced, forsook the cause on the first turn of fortune, and abandoned his devoted followers, without even offering his own worthless life in ransom for their blood. He gave them up to the savage cruelty of a conqueror, whose defeats were less disgraceful than his triumph, whose brows victory crowned with asphodels instead of laurel, and whose name will be handed down to posterity, as the exterminator of an erring and misguided race, distinguished for a degree of gallantry and devoted attachment to their ancient line of kings, that would have ensured for them the forgiveness and admiration of all who had either head to appreciate or heart to feel the value of such rare and noble qualities.

Trusting to the reader's indulgence for this short digression, we return to the thread of our subject, and proceed to bring forward other proofs of the weakness of modern infantry, as by rule and regulation established.

It is well known that, till within these few years, the Russians never ventured, unless when covered by chevaux-de-frise,* to await the sword-in-hand onsets of the Turks. As soon as the turbaned warriors had been brought up by the iron spikes of the firm-footed Friezelanders, and had inhaled a little sobriety from the well-plied muskets ranged behind, then victory was complete; the Faithful went to

* For the manner in which the chevaux-de-frise were carried, put together, and actually *manœuvred*, see Manstein's Memoirs; for the Russians, with characteristic ingratitude, never mentioned the services of these useful allies. As to the general fact, that most of the Russian and Austrian victories were owing, not to their tactics, but to their chevaux-de-frise; it may be gathered even from the writings of our own countrymen, Bruce and Crawford.

the right-about, and, leaving tents, guns, pashas, and viziers alike in the lurch, every man betook himself, for that year at least, to his own home. If, on the other hand, they broke in among the tacticians, which, but for the chevaux-de-frise, could hardly fail to happen, then the scimitar raged quick, fierce, and masterly, till checked only by the want of victims, or by the excess of the very fury that brought it into action.

During the war of 1768 two scenes of this kind took place near Chotzim; in the first of which three Russian regiments were completely destroyed before they could be supported, though forming one of the centre squares of the army; and in the second, the two battalions of the grenadiers of St. Petersburgh were cut up to a man by a similar sword-in-hand onset, and with a degree of celerity that was not the least astonishing part of the whole transaction. We are indebted for a knowledge of these facts to the memoirs of Prussian officers sent, on one or two occasions, by Frederick II., to accompany the Russian armies; for the Russians themselves never mentioned these "untoward events"—a sufficient reason, perhaps, for our not having a longer list of them. The Turks, to whom the trouble of fighting was enough, never wrote bulletins till they lately took up the practice as part of the European system of tactics; forgetting, unfortunately, that a good blow of a scimitar is worth at least nine-tenths of *la grande science.*

It was during the same war, that the celebrated Hassan Pasha raised the siege of the castle of Lemnos in such gallant style. He crossed over from the Troad, in open boats, during the night, and landed on a retired part of the island, with only two or three thousand men, few of whom had even pistols in addition to their swords. Hav-

ing set the boats adrift, he told his followers that victory was their only resource, and immediately led them against the well-disciplined Russians, men who had fought with success against the armies of Frederick himself, but who were here so completely routed by the superior courage and energetic mode of fighting of a handful of desperadoes, that those who escaped the scimitar owed their safety, less to tactics and science, than to the speed of their flight and the boats of their fleet. This fleet consisted of seven sail of the line, besides other vessels; and, as it could not prevent the passage of Hassan, it offers a valuable illustration of the efficiency of naval blockades.

The affair of Dubitza is still more striking; and is thus related in Bushen's Memorabilia *(Merkwürdigen Welthändel)* of modern times:—"A breach in the strong rampart, that forms the only defence of Dubitza, having been effected, the assault was attempted. But the Turks, making at the moment a sortie, and forcing their way sword-in-hand through the breach, inflicted so heavy a loss on the Imperial army, that the latter, owing also to the appearance of another party of Turks who showed themselves at a distance, were forced to raise the siege, and retire from before the place. The history of Polybius records the only other instance of similar daring, to be met with in the annals of war."

What Marshal Lascy says of the Turks, and their mode of fighting, is too much to the purpose to be here passed over. "The Turks," he says, "are proud, most of them are also personally brave, and their very principles *(grundsätze)* make them hate their enemies. From this it results, that the actions fought against them are generally very sharp; their great skill consists in the dextrous use of the sword, so that whenever they are successful they in-

variably kill or wound a vast number of men," Against such a mode of fighting, the Field Marshal, himself one of the founders of the present school of tactics, knows no remedy but to cover his battalions with chevaux-de-frise. It is only behind the iron spikes of these faithful allies, that cuirassiers and bayoneteers, the pink and pride of modern tactics, are deemed safe from the simple scimitars of the bold and resolute. Might not the Marshal's own words serve as a funeral oration for his science? And can its utter insufficiency be more strongly illustrated?

That the Turks have of late years been constantly the losers, in their wars against the Christian powers, has been owing, less to their want of tactics, than to their want of organization, method, and subordination: without these, all other military qualities are, in the present systematic mode of warfare, perfectly unavailing; and of these the Moslems have been totally destitute. Had they combined discipline with their former mode of fighting, and known the full value of their sword-in-hand onsets, the late bold *coup-de-pointe* across the Balkan, would probably have been paid for in Russian heads rather than in Turkish piasters; for, as far as we can make out, it was an enterprise founded upon no strategical principles whatever; but was merely risking an army, in the real Napoleon style, on the chance of events that fortune might bring about, but which the strength of the invaders could not effectuate. It proved successful; for war, like all other lotteries, has its prizes, the glittering rewards of which offer tempting inducement to the commanders, though unfortunately the poor soldiers invariably pay the forfeiture of the blanks that, in such mere games of chance, follow close behind.*

* This had not been published many weeks, before Diebitch's Polish campaign justified, word for word, what is here stated.

To the instances above quoted, one of a later date must be added; because it is only by being made to pay for the impressive lessons of experience that vanity allows us to profit by them. After the first expedition to the Persian Gulf, 500 sepoys, trained and instructed in the European manner, and commanded by English officers, were left behind in order to check the marauding propensities of some of the native tribes. This detachment was attacked by a party of Arabs, who sword-in-hand rushed upon them in the real Turkish and Highland style, and cut them down almost to a man. We appeal to the officers of the 65th regiment, who were subsequently sent to avenge this insult, whether that gallant corps ever witnessed a more precarious contest than the one in which they were engaged with the tribe of Ben-Ali? Let them say what the result would have been if the Arabs, who were far inferior in numbers to the total of the British force, had, instead of opening out from the fire of the 65th regiment, borne straight down upon them, or had been so judiciously led as to arrive unawares on the British line, in the manner in which they came upon the piquets the night after the landing!

But how, it may be asked, does it happen that soldiers regularly trained to war should be inferior to men, who have nothing but native daring in their favour? Simply because there is nothing energetic in modern tactics: the men have no skill in the use of the clumsy weapons placed in their hands; they are not trained to individual exertion; have, consequently, no confidence in their individual power, and only look to the mass for results; an error amply shared by all modern tacticians, who entirely forget that a body of men has strength and value only in propor-

tion to the strength of the individuals of whom it is composed. Nothing is so easy, therefore, as to account, on just principles, for the overthrow of the infantry in the cases here cited. We have seen, by comparing the numbers of killed and wounded in modern battles, with the number of combatants, that it requires, on an average, more than a day's exertion to enable an infantry soldier to put an enemy *hors-de-combat;* or, we may say, that it requires 100* musket-shots to produce that effect. At all events, the duration of a modern action, and the numbers engaged amply prove, when compared with the execution done, how slowly regular infantry perform their work of destruction.

On the other hand, men who fight as the Turks and Highlanders once fought, perform their work of destruction in a very expeditious manner. They can hardly be exposed during more than a minute to the fire of their enemies; for 250 or 300 yards is the greatest efficient range of musketry, and this is a distance that active men will easily traverse in about a minute, without suffering much loss from those who, as we have seen, require a day each before they bring down an adversary. And when they close, what can modern infantry oppose to the bold and spirit-stirring onset of enemies, skilful in the use of an arm whose every blow tells, and whose blows are dealt with a rapidity that soon puts all idea of priming and loading out of the question? Their bayonets perhaps,—"*risum teneatis, amici.*" Let any one hold up at arm's length a musket and bayonet, feel its weight and handiness, and look at its form; he will first see the thick,

* By some calculations no less than 800 shots are required. We take 100 as the highest estimate we have seen.

clumsy butt bending downwards, then the straight line of the barrel with its heavy lock, next the arm of the bayonet standing off at a right angle, and lastly, the shaking blade itself again slanting away to the right; the entire of the rickety zigzag instrument measuring from butt to point six feet two inches, projecting, at the position of the charge, about three feet and a half from the soldier's person, and weighing twelve pounds. And this is the sort of thing with which soldiers, totally untrained to its use as an arm of personal combat, are expected to oppose the sword, the handiest and most efficient weapon ever put into the destroying hand of man; the very wave of which acts as an electrifying power on the spirits of the brave!

The bayonet may, in full truth, be termed the grand mystifier of modern tactics. We here appeal publicly to the most experienced officers of the army, to those who fought, as many really did, in Egypt, the Peninsula, and at Waterloo, and ask, whether any one of them ever beheld a bayonet contest? Did they ever, in field or breach, on plain or rampart, behold men thrust, and counter-thrust at each other with their bayonets? That in some scrambling attack of works, or some hasty flight out of works or villages, a soldier may perhaps have been killed or wounded with a bayonet is possible: but to suppose that soldiers ever rushed into close combat, armed only with bayonets, is an absurdity; it never happened, and never can happen.

Musket-balls have brought thousands and thousands of men to the ground, because hundreds of thousands of shots are fired on every occasion; round and grape have also helped to irrigate the thirsty earth with the blood of her children; the sabres of the cavalry have occasionally dealt efficient blows, and the spears of the lancers may, at times

have overtaken some wretched fugitive, who had not sufficient courage to face so paltry a weapon; but the bayonet shines in virgin brightness, hailed as the victor of every field, and yet undimmed by the blood of *fighting* men. It is the arm, *par excellence*, of an age that wins battles by the force of intellect, by the pressure of a fore-finger, and by the bloodless display of this Mesmerian arm, before which the heads of the mighty are bowed to the dust, and the backs of the fierce turned to hasty and ignominious flight.

That men have fled before our bayonets, proves nothing. The science of tactics, rendered necessary, in order to curb the evil propensities of mankind, can rest with safety on the sad and melancholy power of destruction alone. The effects produced on the imagination can never be relied upon; because the effect produced one day may not follow on the next. The French cavalry generally stood the charge of the British; why then should the infantry always be expected to run away? And what would have been the consequence, if, in some of the headlong attacks made by British infantry upon vastly superior numbers, they had come against foes provided with efficient arms, well-skilled in the use of such arms, and closing as boldly as the French cavalry generally did? If, by good fortune, this has not yet happened, it may happen, and should, therefore, be provided against; for military history is little more than a succession of delusions dispelled by disasters.

Having seen how far tactics and training qualify the soldier for close fighting, let us next see how he gets on in distant, and other occasional modes of combat.

After the unfortunate attack on Rosetta, in 1807, three companies of the 78th, and some other detachments, whilst

attempting to effect their retreat to Alexandria, were defeated and taken by a party of Albanians; who surrounded them, and kept them constantly at long shots, without attempting to come to close quarters. It was, on a small scale, an exact renewal of the defeat of Crassus and his legions without the Roman skill in hand-to-hand combat, could the action have been brought to that issue. The Albanians, owing to the wretched construction of their long unwieldy muskets, and to the badness of their ammunition—their balls being invariably cut or hammered into any shape but a round one, are well known to be even worse shots than the trained soldiers of Europe; and their only mode of fighting consists, like that of the Parthians, in keeping their enemies at a distance.

Yet, before such men, was a strong detachment of the proved soldiers of England, forced to lay down their arms! Totally unskilled in any mode of individual contest, they formed a square, and thus, presented an almost infallible mark to the aim of their unskilful enemies: their own fire being at the same time too inefficient to make any impression on their scattered foes; who, it is well known, would not have remained in the open field exposed to much danger. The Greek revolution war—the heroic struggle *par excellence*, offers no instance of a Greek or Albanian force ever risking the loss of even fifty men in the open plain, as long as the means of flight were in their power. That the Albanians far outnumbered the British on this occasion, is very true; but it is the object of tactics, to render the few capable of contending against the many.

The defeats sustained by the French in Africa can, in like manner, be ascribed to their system of tactics only,—for there are no braver soldiers than the French,—but their

tactics, instead of rendering them strong, rendered them weak against adversaries who were not disposed to fight in masses,—the only mode of fighting known to tacticians, —and who cared nothing for the conventional rules of European warfare. During the late contest, the Arabs had no posts, points, or positions, the loss of which, to them, would have been the signal of defeat. When pressed they retired, and the ground they lost was no gain to the enemy; when successful, they advanced; their swarms closing, like a circle of fire, round their adversaries, who wanted the individual skill in arms, which could alone make any impression on such scattered foes. The Arabs could only be seriously injured or intimidated by seeing their best, and foremost warriors, fall beneath the fire of the French; instead of which they were naturally encouraged by seeing hundreds of shots fired, without producing any effect whatever. Their own fire, though more unskilfully directed even than the fire of the French—their arms being much worse—became, nevertheless, more destructive, from being concentrated against more compact bodies. It appears also that a great many of the French skirmishers were slain by the Arabs in hand-to-hand combat: once closed with, the tacticians were defenceless; and perished as victims to modern science. That France may easily crush a petty Bey of Constantine, who can probably not bring five thousand men into the field, is sufficiently evident; but she will have to effect this by the weight of masses; by the number, discipline, and organization of her troops, and not by their tactics.

Several of the actions, or skirmishes rather, fought during our last American war, in Upper Canada, furnish ample proof of the disadvantages under which mere tactical sol-

diers fight, when contending against men who, however inferior in every essential military quality, happen to be individually superior in the use of arms. Owing to their firmness and discipline, the British were generally victorious in those actions; but as the actual fighting took place with arms, in the use of which they were far, and needlessly inferior, success was always attended with a greater loss than what was suffered when contending against the disciplined armies of Europe: a loss much greater, too, than should have been experienced from enemies who, however brave and superior in point of numbers, were far from being our equals as soldiers.

One of the actions of this ill-conducted war* is too strikingly illustrative of the effects of tactical training, to be here omitted.

An American army, that in European warfare would have been called a division, was surprised by the 49th and 89th regiments, at Stoney Creek. The attack was made by night; the sentinels were cut down before they could give the alarm; and so well was every part of the onset conducted, that the enemy were literally found fast asleep in their tents and bivouacs: the victory was actually gained before a single man had been lost. But the evil genius of modern tactics grants no bloodless victories, and was not to be defrauded by either party of its usual share of slaughter. The men, totally unused to the bayonet, as an arm of personal contest, began to fire; the Americans sprang to their arms; a desultory night-action commenced

* Ill-conducted by the English and Canadian governments. The defence of the immense frontier of Canada by a few weak battalions and untrained provincials, reflects the highest credit on the actual defenders. There were three British soldiers to every mile of frontier.

in the woods, all the advantages of the surprise were completely frustrated, and the British, though as usual victorious, lost, by friends and foes, nearly as many men as their defeated adversaries.

Something of the same kind took place at Arayo de Molino. There, as at Stoney Creek, the surprise of the enemy was complete; all that leaders could do was done; and Cæsar himself never conducted an enterprise with greater skill than was displayed on both occasions. But no sooner was the object of all this ability to be struck for,—no sooner was the melancholy work of destruction to begin, than the genius of gunpowder resumed its sway. The men, instead of rushing in upon the astonished and confused enemy, as the Romans would have done, as all men properly trained and armed for war should have done—followed the only impulse that modern tactics give, or ever will give, to men of earthly mould; they began to fire, and the slow execution of the musket gave the French breathing time, of which they made good use; and leaving guns, baggage and plunder behind, saved at least half the number of their men. Seven thousand men had surprised three thousand in the most complete manner possible: fifteen hundred were killed, wounded, or taken; the rest escaped. It required the exertions of four tacticians, with every advantage on their side, to secure or bring down one adversary!!!

The skill of the Americans in the use of the rifle was very conspicuous during the late war, and, as brave men, they naturally made the most of the advantage. But the tales of wonder related of that skill, prove how ignorant men generally are of the real power of fire-arms; for no arms ever constructed by human hands could, if fixed and

levelled with mathematical precision, come within fifty degrees of what is told of every Kentucky rifle. Nothing can give a more striking proof of this, than the fact, that in all the actions fought on open ground, where the fire of both parties could tell, the fire of the common English shots invariably produced a greater effect than that of the most skilful Americans. This assertion is not to be turned against us; for it must be recollected, that owing to the many advantages the British possessed over the Americans, they ought, notwithstanding their inferiority, to have inflicted a heavy loss on their adversaries, with little risk to themselves, had they been equal to the latter in the use of arms.

In both our wars with America we suffered severely from the superior skill with the rifle, displayed by the people of that country. This loss was not so great as to influence ultimate results; for ill as those wars were conducted on our part, it was only a factious opposition that forced the feeble government of Britain to make peace when success was actually within their grasp; but the fall of every soldier who is lost, owing to the superior skill of the enemy, is a reproach to the system under which he is trained; and which leaves him inferior to those against whom he is called upon to contend. It is a double reproach upon us, because Englishmen are particularly apt at learning all military and athletic exercises; and there is certainly no witchcraft in good rifle or musket shooting: it is an art that all men of ordinary nerve, and powers of vision, may easily acquire; but as our soldiers are not, like the back-woodsmen of America and the foresters of Germany, trained to the practice from infancy, good instruction must make up for that disadvantage. But the

present mode of drill only tends to make men bad shots, as Fromm, in his "Direction for the Instruction of the Infantry in the use of Fire-arms," very clearly proves. We have, as yet, derived no benefit from the experience so dearly purchased in our American contests; and were we called upon to take the field in Canada tomorrow, our soldiers would, individually, be found as unfit as ever for that peculiar kind of warfare.

There is another very important question resulting from this insufficiency of modern tactics. It is this: can modern infantry assail well-constructed and well-defended intrenchments with any prospect of success, unless artillery has first cleared the way, by injuring the works, and driving the defenders from their posts? We suspect not: the defenders may, no doubt, betake themselves to flight, as they very often do; and works may be so badly constructed as to afford little protection, or, they may admit of being passed over at a run; in all which cases success will be easily enough attained; but fairly constructed, and fairly defended works and redoubts are obstacles certain to arrest the best of modern infantry, however boldly the reverse may be asserted.

Where greatly superior numbers can rush on to the attack, sheltered from the fire by broken or undulating ground, success will, no doubt, be greatly facilitated. But lines thrown up by officers of ordinary ability are in general so placed as to have clear fronts, to the extent, at least of musket range; or they have flanking posts capable of commanding such broken ground; and where this is ably done, there will be few chances of success left to the assailants.

For the present, we shall leave the fire of artillery en-

tirely out of the question; because, if we provide one party with guns, we must be equally liberal to the other; and at New Orleans, the American artillery had silenced the British guns many days before the assault was attempted. On that hopeless and ill-fated occasion, every thing was against the assailants; and Fortune, to show her power,—to show how little she can be relied upon in war, forsook the brave in the hour of need,—left them to the resources of modern tactics, which, without her aid, proved "baseless as the fabric of a vision." The question here must be confined, therefore, to unsupported infantry, attacking intrenchments defended only by infantry.

At three hundred yards the assailants come within range of musketry. Where you have a good barrier between you and the enemy, and can safely give him at least a partial fire at that distance, it may be as well to do so. This fire will not be very effective, but the few shots that tell, help to irritate, and always cause some trifling confusion in the advancing mass. As the columns approach, the defenders, confident in their good breast-works, fire with comparative coolness, and with far greater accuracy than could be expected from men exposed in the open field. The assailants cannot run on, but must march slowly for the purpose of preserving something like order; the defenders have ample time to ply their muskets, therefore; entire columns present objects not easily missed; and men begin to fall in the front rank, and on the flanks also, as soon as the fire from the salient faces of the works takes effect. The irritated and impatient multitude hurry on, lose the last remnant of order, and reach the ditch, a shapeless mass, in which, grenadiers, light infantry, and battalion men are all mixed together in helpless confusion.

We shall suppose that there are no *trous-de-loups*, that there is no *abattis*, and that the ditch is gained without such obstacles having been encountered. How is it to be passed? Armed with his heavy musket, rendered doubly unhandy by the bayonet which is now affixed to it,—and which, in this leaping, climbing, scrambling business, is as dangerous to friends as harmless to foes,—what can the soldier effect? He is within a few feet of the muzzles of hostile muskets that are pouring out a fire, destructive from its nearness; unused to gymnastic exercises, and accoutred as he is,—though he has thrown away his stiff dog-collar stock,—he cannot clear the most ordinary palisades, and to stay and cut them down, close under the fire of the enemy, when the bravest and the best of the officers and men are falling fast around, seems pretty well next to an impossibility.

But let us suppose that courage and energy have overcome the obstacle; still there is the rampart to be ascended. The general impulse has, of course, been broken by the ditch; the mass are in utter confusion; so that, with every exertion, the officers can only give a partial impulse on different points. Some men more active than the rest ascend the rampart; but they effect this by twos, threes, and tens only, and, unable to rush upon the foe and clear the way for those that follow, they are forced, if they are to do anything, to halt on the conquered ground, and to begin firing, certain to be shot or taken as they cross the parapet. A few men scrambling slowly up a hostile rampart in this manner may possibly frighten away the timid, particularly by night, when darkness magnifies the foe; but with modern arms, they can never fight away the bold. "Not fight them away!" exclaims the tactician; "have we not bayonets; charge! charge! of course." Poor and puerile af-

fectation, hardly deserving to be answered. The bayonet never yet effected anything, and while the world stands, never will effect anything against a fighting foe who has even the wish to remain uninjured; nor will soldiers, except in a desperate case of self-defence, when men, as in the act of drowning, catch at straws,—attempt to use a weapon which their plain good sense tells them to be more cumbersome than useful: they will never rush upon an enemy with their hands manacled to such a weapon. The moment the soldier's natural instinct gets the better of his tactical training,—which it does the moment that confusion takes place,—self-preservation prompts him to kill, or destroy the enemy at a distance, and he begins to fire accordingly. With shield poised high, with sword or battle-axe in hand, a man may give the reins to courage, and rush bravely upon the foe; the very waving of such arms elevates the spirit of the brave: but with a musket and bayonet, the best must stand still, in order to prime and load. The modern soldier may be killed while moving on; but he can only kill an enemy while he is himself stationary; his arms and mode of fighting are totally unsuited, therefore, to active attacks on works.

But we can cover the advance of our columns by a fire of musketry. Though not often, this is sometimes practicable, and must, therefore, be examined. In front of the advancing columns, no fire can be kept up, unless perhaps, by a few covered and concealed men, as the skirmishers would only impede the march of the main bodies, without protecting them from the fire of the works. The detached men must, therefore, be placed on the flanks of the columns, and opposite to other parts of the works from the exact points attacked: they will be exposed to the fire

from those points, and will, most assuredly, return that fire, in order to protect themselves, instead of obliquing their fire for the purpose of protecting their friends and comrades in the advancing columns: the love of our neighbour is not yet so strongly implanted in the human breast as to eradicate all thoughts of self-preservation. Some of the regulations talk, indeed, of "keeping up a formidable cross-fire;" and such things look well enough at a field-day or review; but the first shot fired in stern hostility instantly reduces all such puerilities to utter and absolute nothingness.

That fortified lines have frequently been carried by infantry, proves nothing, until we know how the works were constructed and defended. It is difficult to say, what has not been done in war. In 1806, the strong fortress of Spandau was taken by a regiment of French dragoons: yet no one will, on that account, believe cavalry capable of charging over palisades, ditches, and ramparts. The question is, what can really be effected by the force of modern arms?

Let not the writer's own words be here quoted against him. In another part of this volume, he has said, that it often happens in war, when the spirit of victory is high, when its flashes of inspiration dispel the clouds of doubt, as the flashes of lightning dispel the clouds of darkness, that soldiers must give the reins to valour, and, trusting to fortune and their swords, grasp at victory, though placed beyond barriers from which mere calculation would shrink back dismayed. But the effects that may be produced by mere unsupported gallantry have limits; for there is a weight and quantity of fire through which the slow and vulnerable frame of man cannot pass unharmed.

No one has spoken more slightingly of the effects of musketry than the writer of these pages: and he is fully confident that no modern infantry would, on fair ground, have the smallest chance against bold and determined men who should rush in upon them, sword or lance, in hand. But things are changed the moment obstacles, capable of breaking the onset, intervene. It then depends upon the nature and position of those obstacles whether they can arrest the assailants long enough to give the musket time to perform its slow work of destruction. Some obstacles may be overcome with little loss, some with greater, and some cannot be overcome without a loss sure of being destructive to the attacking party. At Badajos, the sword-blades *chevaux-de-frise* could not be cleared away under the very muzzles of the French guns and muskets. It was the same at New Orleans; the assailants were arrested by obstacles that gave the hostile arms time to perform the work of destruction to an extent which rendered success unattainable. To draw the exact line between what can, and cannot be effected in war, forms, of course, the great difficulty of the profession; a difficulty towards which we strive to blind ourselves not a little.

By one set of tacticians we are gravely told that horsemen, arriving at full speed against a square of infantry, being exposed to only a single volley of miserable musketry, must yet quail before that one discharge of ill-aimed fire-arms. "How vain," says Colonel Napier,* "how fruitless to match the sword with the musket! To send the charging horseman against the steadfast veteran." That is, cavalry soldiers are allowed to run away from one single volley,—there is nothing like calling things by their

* Peninsular War. vol. iv. page 240.

proper names—but infantry have no such privilege; they are expected to press on against all the volleys that can be fired at them, while advancing against and forcing the passage of hostile lines. "Forward!" says the Martinet; "let the columns move on with sloped arms, at a hundred and eight paces in a minute; see that covering and distance are well preserved, and victory is certain; for there is nothing to the contrary in the Book of Regulations." The columns are rent and scattered by round and grape during the long and slow march; ranks are swept away by the vengeful rifle and by peals of musketry; and a third of the men have fallen before the works are even reached. "Very melancholy," says Martinet; "not explained by the Regulations;—the men should not have fallen, the works should have been carried; fault somewhere, no doubt; hope we shall be more fortunate another time; *en attendant*, the less that is said about it the better."

But should the defenders fly from their posts, and resign the victory, then are rewards, honours, and decorations showered down upon the conquering leaders; not only is their valour lauded in the highest degree, and deservedly enough perhaps, but their skill, their plans, and combinations are praised in like manner, and held up as evident proofs of the greatest military genius and sagacity; though, in nine cases out of ten, the boasted plans could owe their success only to the feebleness of the vanquished or to the frolics of fortune.

It must not be thought that, in this endeavour to point out the insufficiency of infantry tactics, we are, therefore, advocating any of those methods of war that, as we have before shown, have on many occasions proved superior to our own. On the contrary, we are convinced that an

army trained on European principles, and conducted with ordinary talent, will always, in the end, prove victorious over enemies possessing merely the wild energy displayed by the Turks or Highlanders, or the skill of the Americans in distant fighting. But it must be perfectly evident that an army which should add to modern tactics the skill of the Turks in close combat, and that of the Americans in distant fighting, would naturally possess an incalculable advantage over a mere tactical army as now constituted. And it is in the firm conviction that British soldiers possess, above all other men, the qualities necessary for the attainment of such skill in arms, that we venture to denounce the insufficiency of that mode of training, which, take it as we will, goes no farther than to make a man come into position and pull a trigger. This mighty effort of modern art requires at the best, passive courage only, and leaves energy and active courage, as well as personal strength and activity, those noble attributes of British soldiers, totally dormant, till called forth, under every disadvantage, in moments of extremity and in scenes of carnage, when the humbled pride of science is forced to rely for success and safety on the mere untrained and neglected gallantry of the soldier.

Most of us have at times had occasion to witness the active energy displayed by sailors in situations of difficulty; this has always struck foreigners, who are generally little used to naval habits, even more than ourselves, and those among them who fought in our ranks, and who have done justice to the gallantry of our soldiers, have nevertheless expressed a much higher admiration of our sailors. Captain Heussinger, a German officer, who served with the Brunswick Hussars in Catalonia, says, in speaking of

the quickness with which the batteries were raised and armed at the siege of Tarragona, "It was owing principally to the almost superhuman exertions of the men-of-war's-men that this was effected with such celerity under the heavy and constant fire of the fortress; but no labour was too great, and no situation too dangerous, for these daring and undaunted men."

No method of mere training can be expected to render the landsman equal, in point of handiness, to the seaman, whose entire life is a course of training; yet a great deal might be done by a good system of athletic and gymnastic exercises, were the advantages to be derived from individual exertion once fairly avowed. We have no means of accounting for the superior efficiency of the ancient armies in the field, unless by attributing it to their superior training; with them this resulted, no doubt, in a great measure from national habit; but exactly in proportion as the habits of our population unfit us for the toils of war, so should our mode of training make up for the deficiency. Polybius, himself a soldier of experience, estimates at only 3300 the greatest number of men absent from the army of Alexander at the time of the battle of the Issus, though that prince had entered Asia two years before, at the head of 44,000 men, and had afterwards received a reinforcement of 6000 more.* Whilst the British army in the Peninsula, of inferior strength, the best equipped and the best provided for of any modern army, had seldom less than 10,000 men away from the ranks, mostly sick in hospital. And none who witnessed will easily forget the scenes of suffering that the track of wretched stragglers exhibited in rear of the newly-arrived

* Polybius, Book xii.

corps during a long and fatiguing day's march; these men were only then beginning part of that course of military training which should have been completed before they were called upon to take the field. The soldiers of the 5th division, who fought at Quatre Bras, had been under arms the greater part of the previous night, had marched upwards of twenty-four miles on one of the hottest days of summer, each man carrying a weight of forty-six pounds, independent of what provision he might have in his havresack, and found at the end of such a march, not rest, but the deadly and desperate conflict which ensued. Yet this is the profession that requires no previous training, and that seems now destined to obtain no ultimate reward!

The fifth volume of Colonel Napier's History, furnishes some valuable illustrations in support of the views here advanced. In one part the author informs us, on the very best authority, that a third of the British troops were at times in hospital, or in the rear attending and escorting the sick. That is, the country paid, armed, and supported 45,000 men in order to have 30,000 men effective in the field. So little was the training, composition, and proper support of the men an object with the government, so little was real military organization understood, that in the course of ordinary service two-thirds only of their soldiers were effective; and those two-thirds acting, of course, with the sort of skill and energy which, under such circumstances, could alone be expected. One-third of the army was thus worse than useless, for they were a heavy burden to the rest, and the other two-thirds were feeble compared to what they might have been rendered by proper training, support, and by the prospect of honorable reward and distinction. One cause of the dread-

ful waste of life and treasure resulting from such a system was the constant striving to save money, and to propitiate economic and popularity-courting patriots; another cause was, the mistaken view entertained of the value of modern tactics. Both errors have been dearly enough paid for, but unfortunately always at the expense of the guiltless and the suffering; for patriots flourished and feasted, while soldiers were dying of want and exhaustion.

But the system, it seems, works too well to be changed. Indeed! Did it work well when an entire battalion of regularly-drilled Sepoys was cut down to a man by a party of wild Arabs? Or did it work well when a strong detachment of the trained soldiers of England were forced to lay down their arms before a miserable crew of cowardly Albanians? Was its excellence particularly conspicuous when the grenadier company of the 8th regiment were nearly all killed or wounded in skirmishing with some American militia who were advancing towards York, and who, it is well known, would not have purchased the mighty honour of burning an old town-house at any great loss, had the followers of the system known how to inflict it? Sailors, or other men trained to active habits, would probably have succeeded in the attacks of Fort Christoval, Burgos, and in the first attack of St. Sebastian; but what did the wonder-working system do to aid the mere helpless courage of the soldier on those unfortunate occasions? At the battle of Aulroy, fought in 1364, the English archers, though unprovided with arms of length, rushed fearlessly on the French men-at-arms, tore the battle-axes from the saddles of their enemies, and "did," as Froissard says, "gallant execution with them." But on the 16th of May, 1811, an entire brigade of British infantry were defeated

and taken by a body of French cavalry, who were not, like the horsemen of former times, provided with defensive armour, whilst the infantry had muskets and bayonets; yet, owing to the immaculate system that works so well, the followers of that system were to a man cut down or taken, whilst their ancestors, listening only to the dictates of courage, energy, and activity, gained a complete victory.

In war, the want of success is not always a proof of bad management, because, in the greatest of all games of chance, fortune will at times turn even against the bravest and the best. But, in the cases above quoted, it was the system, and the system alone, that led to disaster, and, under similar circumstances, the same causes will lead to exactly the same results. Nor is it in these occurrences of minor importance that the insufficiency of modern tactics is alone to be discovered; for its evil influence naturally accompanied all our military operations from first to last, and made us fight long, and pay dearly, for our ultimate triumph.

Owing to the bravery of our soldiers and the conduct of our officers, victors in every action, we generally gained little more than the Spartan honour of maintaining the field of battle. At Vimiera, two-thirds of the British troops present defeated the whole of the French army; yet such was the system according to which these victors had been trained, that they allowed the vanquished to make good their retreat in open day, to dictate the Convention of Cintra, and to return to the charge a few months afterwards. As this particular instance will, however, be ascribed to a curious and accidental succession of commanders, we may cite the battle of Vittoria as the most striking of many other cases in point.

The gallant onset of the British drove upwards of 50,000

French, with the loss of the whole of their *matériel*, from the field; but the system, the precious system, which confines the training of the soldier to the pulling of a trigger, prevented the victors from inflicting any heavy loss on the vanquished, of whom one-tenth only were killed, wounded, or taken, whilst the other nine-tenths were allowed to come back with fresh *matériel*, and renew the fight at Pampeluna; and again, after a proportionate succession of losses, at Bayonne, Orthez, and Thoulouse. On all these, and many other occasions, one party constantly illustrated the truth of the Hudibrastic lines, that

> He who fights and runs away,
> May live to fight another day;

whilst the other party as constantly forgot, that only

> Those who are in battle slain
> Will not return to fight again;

for the men who ran away returned to fight again and again; but the brave and greatly daring too often suffered a tremendous loss, which, owing to their system of tactics, they had no means of avenging on their defeated foes. At Fuentes d'Onor, the Allies rested quietly on their arms as soon as the French called "Hold—enough." At Albuera the gallant remnant of the victors had no means of inflicting any proportionate loss on their defeated adversaries; nor could they have stood a renewal of the onset. In the Pyrenees many difficult positions were carried in the most heroic manner, notwithstanding a heavy loss inflicted by the fugitives from Vittoria and Pampeluna, who were generally allowed to retire almost unmolested from the field, in order to return "and fight another day."

There is yet a stronger proof to be adduced of the value of the system.

The numerous Austrian and Prussian armies that took the field at the commencement of the Revolution war were trained and drilled exactly according to the system that we now pursue; and not a little proud the well-powdered and well-buttoned *Soldadoes* were of the supposed advantages their system and *savoir faire* gave them over the republican sansculottes. The latter had no other tactics but *ça ira*, and no strategy but *en avant*; and could only move in crowded masses, which they called columns, and from which, when they came into action, the boldest and most enterprising started forward to act as tirailleurs. Yet what was the consequence? The French soldiers, "bold with the strength that" fancied "freedom gave," overcame the men of science, who were not a little surprised at such a result, but who, instead of looking for the cause in the natural intelligence and new *élans* of the French troops, attributed it to this new mode of fighting; and instead of calling forth and properly employing the native courage of the Germans, they took up the uncongenial system of their enemies, and naturally found themselves nothing the better for it.

The French, on their side, not wishing to owe their success exclusively to the gallantry of their soldiers, determined that their *génie militaire* should come in for a share of the honour; and thinking that some great physical force was mysteriously concealed in their unwieldy masses, they reduced the formation and mode of attack to a regular system, at a time, too, when artillery was constantly increasing, and when the number of guns was already reckoned by hundreds in every field. This system, the most outrageous that ever entered into the heads of men, performed wonders by the aid of the conscription, and by the bound-

less rewards so liberally bestowed on the victors, out of the spoils of the vanquished, who, on their side, were generally inferior in numbers and resources, and not unfrequently worse commanded even than the conquerors. The banner of European independence was about to be struck to folly and presumption, when the soldiers of England, ridiculed abroad, insulted and despised at home, appeared in the arena, with the very same system of tactics so easily overthrown at the commencement of the war.

But that system was now in different hands, and it soon became apparent that victory was to the strong and valiant, not to the feeble or worthless method of war that either of the parties followed. The stubborn courage of the British was not to be shaken by the fierce onset of the French columns. On the contrary, they generally reserved their fire with great coolness; a thing very trying to an advancing enemy; and though individually very bad shots, they could not, altogether, miss the entire of the masses that were moving against them. The consequence always was, that the assailants halted in order to fire, and as the front ranks only could use their muskets, the rest, left inactive and uselessly exposed, were naturally shaken, and got into confusion; so that a charge of bayonets,—a thing that hurt nobody, but was out of the conventional rules of European warfare,—invariably put the whole to flight, though generally with what might be deemed a trifling loss. This was the constant tale from Vimiera to Waterloo, whenever the French were the assailants; and when the British were the attacking party, they had, from the natural hardihood of the men, still greater advantages.

The approach of a hostile army, whose columns, glittering with arms, are seen advancing along the plain, and

gradually expanding and taking post preparatory to the attack, is an imposing and majestic sight, and well calculated to augment the danger in the excited imagination of those who are quietly waiting the onset. Then the increasing report of artillery, followed by the sound of the balls forcing their fierce way through the resisting air, and every now and then striking down a file or two; while the mangled limbs and agonised features of the sufferers add fearfully to the trying nature of the scene. The steadier the enemy comes on,—and his losses and waverings are not seen when the fire of musketry begins,—the more the hearts of the defenders sink and cool, the idea of danger quickly augments, and poor human nature directs all powers of thought to the means of safety. The assailants, on the other hand, derive a sort of wild courage from the very circumstance of advancing; the mere idea of attacking is "spirit stirring," and animates British soldiers with a species of enthusiasm that constantly rendered them victorious, even under the most difficult circumstances, whenever the foe was fairly accessible.

Let it not be thought that a more energetic mode of warfare would be more sanguinary and destructive than the insufficient system we are here condemning. Alas! the reverse is the case; for modern tactics, by making battles less decisive, have rendered wars much longer, and infinitely more destructive. In ancient times, when the combatants came to close quarters, a defeated army was annihilated; there was no escaping from the uplifted sword or lance; and a general action almost always settled the question at issue. Now, on the contrary, battles are fought at a distance; if an army finds itself getting the worse, it makes a skilful retreat, keeps the enemy at the respectful

distance of grape and canister, and if ably commanded, frequently regains in detail, before the end of the campaign, what had been lost by an unsuccessful battle at the commencement. Thus, battles and skirmishes succeed each other with fearful rapidity; campaign follows campaign in melancholy succession; as the enemy is never destroyed, no rest can be given to the soldier; constant fatigue and exposure wear out the bravest and the best, and gaunt hunger, with its accompanying crimes and diseases, all natural attendants of large armies and protracted campaigns, far exceeds in its sweeping ravages, and a thousand fold in its horrors, the more prompt and humane effects produced by the sword or sarissa on the field of battle.

How far, now, does the system, the insufficiency of which we have beeen attempting to shew, suit the character of our population? How does it suit the men who captured the Hermione; who, in spite of boarding-netting, and of every other preparation made to oppose them, cut out the Chevrette from under all the batteries of Camarette Bay; who boarded the Chesapeake, and, sword-in-hand, carried a Russian flotilla against countless odds in Port Baltic? How does it render justice to the soldiers who escaladed Badajos, where not a stone of the fortifications had been injured, and where the most experienced troops, the conquerors of continental Europe, were waiting to receive them? How does it accord with the spirit of the men who stormed St. Sebastian in open day, and calmly waited, exposed to all the fire of the fortress, under an imperfect breach, till the shot of their own guns,—striking only a few feet above their heads,—rendered the passage practicable, and then rushed upon the astonished enemy with a degree of fury, that neither the skilful contrivances,

nor the avowed courage of the defenders could resist, leaving it doubtful whether their stern composure, whilst calmly waiting amidst the heaps of dead and dying, or their subsequent impetuosity, was most to be wondered at; but leaving no doubt as to the invincibility of such men, whenever their training and system of war should do justice to their unconquerable qualities?

The present system of tactics only enables a commander to place his soldiers front to front with the enemy, leaving both parties to exchange shots till the least resolute forsakes the field. A modern battle is a mere question of who shall hold out longest; for except where works, posts, or positions of particular strength are assailed, the loss is nearly equal on both sides. Nor can it well be otherwise; both parties use the same arms, and with nearly equal skill, or equal want of skill rather; so that the effect produced, must, in ordinary cases, be about equal. With modern infantry, there can be no pursuit destructive to a flying enemy: the defeated party get, perhaps, a couple of ill-aimed rounds more than the victors, and that is all. When there is no cavalry ready and able to break in among the confused mass of the vanquished, in order to complete the rout, little is gained to the victors beyond a barren field of battle, and whatever advantage may, with the aid of fortune, be derived from the panic of the enemy. And from battles fought at a distance, in which the contending parties never join, and never think of joining, no other results can be anticipated. The battles of modern infantry cannot, therefore, be very decisive; they are often attended with great bloodshed, but seldom with great consequences.

This single circumstance should, of itself, force the sub-

ject of tactics more particularly on our attention, than on the attention even of foreign nations; for our insular situation renders our expeditionary armies weak in cavalry; we must depend mainly on infantry, and it ought surely to be our interest to render our principal arm as efficient as possible.

The conduct displayed in the actions before mentioned ought to suggest another, and a very important question. If such heroic conduct was displayed at the cold call of unrewarded duty, what might not have been done by such soldiers, if they had been taught to take a pride in personal strength, activity, and skill in arms; and encouraged to look for success, applause, and rewards from their individual gallantry and exertions! Let those who know of what inflammable materials the human heart is composed, answer the question; and let them recollect Crastinius before the battle of Pharsalia, "This day, Cæsar, thou shalt praise me dead or alive."* Let us never hear the unworthy assertion, so often repeated, that British soldiers are incapable of enthusiasm; for, notwithstanding the blighting effects of many parts of our system, countless instances of heroic devotion on the part of private soldiers may be adduced. Our limits prevent us from quoting more than one case, but it is sufficiently to the purpose. During the war in Upper Canada, two soldiers of the 49th regiment were posted in front of a small bridge that crossed a ravine or rivulet, and were ordered, for what reason we know not, to defend it to the last. They were there surrounded by an entire division of the American army, and asked to surrender; but, regardless of the inevitable conse-

* De Bello Civili, lib. iii.

quences of resistance, and mindful only of their orders, these brave men rejected the offer, and fell nobly fighting on the post intrusted to their charge. Greece would have raised heroic marbles to their fame; and Leonidas has been justly immortalized for doing nothing more.

There are, no doubt, many able and enlightened men who uphold existing institutions, less from admiration of the institutions themselves, than from habit, and from seeing the evident superiority of established regulations, over the generality of those plans and projects, so constantly forced upon the attention of the public and of men in power, as in the end to dishearten all serious investigation. But we must beg of those who give way to this sort of apathy, to take a glance at military history, and they will see to what consequences a tenacious adherence to error invariably leads, even when mixed, as in ancient times, with military institutions incomparably superior to any of which the moderns can boast.

The Greek phalanx was perfect in theory, and invincible on level ground; but when any inequality broke its close formation, the soldiers were, from their arms and training, unable to cope individually with enemies better prepared for hand-to-hand combat. Their defeat at Cenocephalea rendered this sufficiently apparent; but the Greeks made no change in their system of tactics; the battle of Pridna followed; the last successor of Alexander was marched in triumph before the chariot of Paulus Æmilius, leaving the 2000 years of slavery, entailed by his defeat, on the land of arts and arms, to serve as a melancholy illustration of the consequences resulting from neglect of just tactical principles and military institutions.

The Romans again, were, as infantry, invincible in close

combat, but ignorant of the real action of cavalry, and almost defenceless against enemies possessing powerful means of distant annoyance. The light that flashed from the Parthian arrows, when Marc Antony was defeated, and when the legions of Crassus were destroyed, was overlooked; the Romans made no change in a system of tactics sanctified by so many previous victories, and the consequence of all long continued military delusion followed as a matter of course; Valerian was defeated and taken, and Julian killed.

Even in later times, the deep formations of the Dutch school, composed of alternate files of musketeers and heavy-armed pikemen, were deemed invincible, till the more moveable brigades of Gustavus Adolphus, broke the spell; and it was only the superior line-fire of the Prussian infantry, that convinced the world of the weakness of Colonel Martinet's system, on which the fate of empires and of armies had been so often staked in confidence.

Thus delusions, dispelled only by disasters, have succeeded each other down to our own time; and the firmness of the British threw, as we have seen, some very unexpected light on the value of those French columns which, to the tunes of "Ca ira" and "Vive l' Empereur," had all but frightened "the great globe itself" out of its propriety.

There are many, it seems, who would silence every speculation of this kind, by appeals to some new science of war, or mode of warfare, discovered of late years, and supposed to be far above all present improvement. We have already expressed ourselves sceptical on this point, and are not altogether disposed to take a few fine phrases, and new names applied to old practices, for a new science. We look

upon the knowledge of the value of our own army as the only very important military legacy bequeathed to us by the war. That long contest proved the dauntless courage of our men, their strength and aptitude for war, the great skill of the scientific departments of our army, the high character of our officers, whose sentiments of honour admitted of a system of discipline and organization being founded on their responsibility, that insured, on the most distant services, the administration of justice, and the performance of duty, with as much accuracy as on the parade at St. James's. This perfect system of subordination, gives strength, confidence and consistency to the scattered members of an army, that, though dispersed over every part of the world, form, by aid of the navy, a force which may almost be said to hold the globe within its iron grasp. A knowledge of this power we acquired by the war; and, if properly used, it has been cheaply purchased. In all othe respects we seem to stand pretty well where we were before; and, as to the great military intelligence of an age, THAT SENT HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF INFANTRY, THE STRENGTH OF ARMIES, TO BATTLE, WITHOUT EVER TEACHING THEM THE USE OF ARMS,—the less, perhaps, that is said about it the better.

ON TACTICS.

PART II.

"Der sehr langsame Eingang, welchen Newton's Lehre in den Köpfen seiner Zeit fand, kann uns zum Maastabe dienen, wie viel Zeit eforderlish sey, dem Menschen irgend eine Idee begrieflish zu machen."—*Welt und Zeit*, vol. iii.

"The time that elapsed before Newton's theory met with belief, serves to show how long it takes to impress any new idea on the minds of men."

COMBAT OF CAVALRY AGAINST INFANTRY.

THE history of every science proves how unwilling men are to abandon long-cherished opinions. Vanity, and that impatience of labour in the search of truth, already noticed by the great historian quoted at the head of this volume, often continue to uphold, at the expense of suffering humanity, mistaken doctrines, the defence of which had long been abandoned by reason and reflection. The science of war, the most complicated of all sciences, and giving, from its very nature,—from having only general principles and no rules,—the greatest opening to the sway of mere belief, has, more than any other, been forced to struggle against the power of antiquated opinion, which, like ivy, not only hides, but hallows the ruin which it covers and adorns: so that entire volumes might be filled with accounts of evils

resulting from a faulty adherence to long-cherished military errors. Even our own age has seen dynasties established and empires overthrown by the event of battles, gained in consequence of the successful resistance made against cavalry by squares of tactical infantry, after opinion had extended to those feeble formations the protection of its mystic shield, the Gorgon power of which was destined to arrest, in mid career, the steeds of the brave, and to paralyze the uplifted arms of the strong.

The cause of this ruling belief must be sought for, less in the results of cavalry and infantry actions, which if duly considered would probably have led to a different conviction, than in the tendency to distant fighting, which has of late become so prevalent. This timid method of war not only fosters all the particles of doubt, fear, and indecision, which may chance to harbour in the minds of commanders; but is fostered by them in return; and doctrines resting on such feeble foundations, must never be allowed to decide important tactical questions.

The closing scene of the last war seemed to set the seal on the universally-received opinion that infantry, when in a state of preparation, could easily resist the onset of cavalry, even upon level ground.

Modern tactical writers also, judging from a few splendid results, and wanting the power, or inclination, to analyze the events from which their conclusions were drawn, generally followed, — with the single exception of Bismark, perhaps, — the same opinion, to which Colonel Napier, though not exactly a tactical writer, has added the high weight of his authority. The cause of error is, therefore, strongly supported, and it behoves us closely to examine the foundation on which it is made to rest. As a nation,

the point at issue concerns us nearly; for, owing to our insular situation, our armies are generally weak in cavalry when they appear in the fields of colonial or continental war. We must either convince ourselves that modern infantry are capable of making unsupported head against the most resolute cavalry that can be encountered, or we are bound to use every effort, in order to improve their strength and efficiency, so as to render them fit for such contests—fit, in fact, to encounter every species of known enemy that the fair chances of battle can bring against them.

The military writers of antiquity, invaluable in the general study of the art of war, give us no aid in estimating the relative strength of infantry and cavalry; for the ancient infantry were strong, owing to their admirable system of tactics, training, and organization, whereas the cavalry were comparatively weak. The Greeks and Romans only skirmished on horseback, or pursued, at the most, a defeated enemy. Their bad horsemanship, together with their wide and open formations, put everything like "the living tempest" of a charge at speed entirely out of the question. But, weak as this sort of cavalry necessarily were, it must be still recollected, and the fact is important, that they contributed, in an eminent degree, to the victories of Alexander and Hannibal, the two greatest commanders of antiquity. Cannæ and Arbela were decided by the skilful use made of cavalry, and prove how much they could effect, even in that feeble state of infancy, when directed by genius and talent.

Though cavalry formed, in general, the strength of the armies of the middle ages, yet as the genius of chivalry tended more to acts of individual prowess and exertion

than to combined efforts, from which striking results could alone be expected, and as the feebleness of the ill-armed infantry allowed few, except the formidable bow-men of England, to show themselves on open ground, little or nothing is left us to glean from that dark period.

The introduction of fire-arms, which by degrees brought infantry back to the field, diminished even the efficiency which the cavalry derived from the energy of knightly spirit and enterprise; for they not only took to the use of the pistol and arquebuse, instead of the sword, their only arm of strength, but gradually covered themselves with such heavy armour, that a dray-horse alone could carry the weight of a man-at-arms completely accoutred. Thus mounted, the cuirassier was just able to sport his clumsy and unwieldy figure, as if for show, up and down the ranks of war, to exchange a few miserable pistol-shots, or, at most, to run a course, with lance in rest, over some hundred yards of perfectly level ground. De la Noue, in his *Discours Politiques et Militaires*, says, that, at thirty-five years of age, a man was already completely lamed by the effect of armour: and James I. justly and wittily observed, that armour not only protected the wearer, but also prevented him from injuring any one else. From cavalry thus equipped, the infantry had not much to dread: and as to the *argoulets*, or light cavalry of the period, they were, in fact, only mounted arquebusiers, intended solely for distant fighting, and consequently as little to be feared as their weighter comrades.

Gustavus Adolphus, whose lofty genius was above being cramped by the tactical opinions of his time, was the first to raise the cavalry from the state of degradation into which they had been allowed to fall. He diminished

the weight of their armour, taught them to charge sword-in-hand, and allowed the front rank only to give a single fire with their pistols during the onset. Great as these improvements were, it is still evident, from his having lamed the action of his cavalry by intermixing them, in the manner of the ancients, with parties of infantry, that Gustavus had not perceived the full force of cavalry action. But though this discovery was reserved for another king of Sweden, Gustavus had evidently prepared the way; for we find in the army which he had originally organized, and in which his gallant spirit long survived his fall, the first appearance of a charge in line, "*attaque en muraille*," as the Théatre Européen calls it, made by the cavalry against infantry in a perfect state of preparation. This was at the battle of Jankowitz, fought in 1645, where a Major-General Douglas, at the head of three squadrons of Swedish cavalry, overthrew, by a sword-in-hand onset, a large body of Imperial infantry, that had resisted every previous effort, and behind which the Imperial cavalry had constantly found shelter. We may venture, from his name, to claim the gallant leader of this charge as a countryman, and hope that, in time of need, the example so bravely set will not lack imitators.

The many and eventful wars of Louis the Fourteenth did nothing for the cavalry—its real action was not congenial to the men of so pompous a period; but whilst the once brilliant sun of that spoiled child of greatness was setting amidst clouds and darkness, a young and heroic king was astonishing the world by the splendour of his exploits in the north. Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, whom it is now so much the fashion to decry, for the simple reason that we love to ridicule and undervalue qua-

lities we can neither equal nor appreciate, and whose only fault consisted, perhaps, in carrying virtues to extremes, was forced to defend himself against the united powers of Russia, Denmark, Saxony, and Poland. Being sovereign only, of a poor, and thinly peopled country, he had to make up, by individual exertion, and by the skill and courage of his soldiers, for the dreadful odds so unjustly arrayed against him. What men could do was done; and when the "unconquered lord of pleasure and of pain" fell at last, Fortune, never more despicable than by her award on this occasion, amply shared, with his innumerable foes, the honour of his overthrow.

The discovery and application of the power of cavalry seemed naturally reserved for a man of such character, placed in such a situation; and to Charles is due the honour of having effected it to its fullest extent. He deprived the cavalry of all defensive armour, forbade all firing, except in skirmishing, and led them, sword-in-hand, fearlessly and successfully against every accessible enemy. From such assailants, redoubts and entrenchments alone could protect the infantry: and at the very time when the French regiment of Alsace was effecting its celebrated retreat,—after the battle of Oudenarde,—when vainly pursued over ten miles of level country by the Allied cavalry, the Swedish dragoons were cutting down the whole of the Saxon infantry, formed in squares, at the battle of Frauenstadt: "*D'autres*" *Gens*, "*d'autres soins.*"

But the career of Charles was too transient, his success too ephemeral, and ascribed more to his personal qualities than to the admirable system of war that seemed naturally to spring from such a character, to admit of its making much impression on military men, who, as Marshal Saxe observes,

"are of all men the most tenacious of existing follies, and averse to change." We consequently find, from Berenhorst, that on the accession of Frederick the Second, the Prussian cavalry, though well powdered and booted, mounted on fat sleek horses, and trained like the infantry, to fire by divisions, subdivisions, and grand divisions, were yet totally unable to ride. This circumstance told rather against them at the battle of Mölewitz, for they were overthrown by the Austrians, who, owing to the lessons they occasionally received from their Turkish neighbours, were somewhat more proficient in cavalry tactics.

So glaring an evil could not escape the penetration of Frederick. He had made the campaigns of Charles XII. his particular study; and though he tried to lessen the fame of the Swedish monarch, of which he was evidently a little jealous, he failed not to profit by his example.* He consequently set about remodelling his cavalry immediately after the first Silesian campaign, and having excellent materials to work upon, and being above all aided by Seidlitz, the *incomparable*, as Berenhorst calls him, he soon succeeded in forming those admirable corps of cavalry, that actually saved the Prussian monarchy, and whose actions may yet be quoted as unsurpassed examples of cavalry excellence. It is needless to say that, in imitation of Charles the Twelfth, he probibited all firing, except in skirmishing, and ordered the cavalry never to await an attack, but constantly to meet the enemy, at full speed, sword in hand. It remained for Napoleon Bonaparte, the military genius *par excellence*, of the intellectual school, again to introduce into the cavalry those feeble modes of combat that had, for more than a century, been held up to scorn and derision.

* See "Observations sur Charles XII."

The 7th regiment of French dragoons, overthrown at Sahagun by the Marquis of Anglesea, at the head of the 15th hussars, awaited the onset *de pied ferme*, thus forfeiting all the advantages to be derived from the impetus of their horses. The squadron of chasseurs defeated and captured by Captain White's troop, in front of Castello Branco, received the charge of the 13th, pistol in hand; and, shame to tell, a regiment of cuirassiers, ay, heavy armed, drew up to receive at the halt, the charge of a party of Brunswick hussars, who, having just defeated a body of French light cavalry, rushed, without first reforming their order, right down upon these new enemies, and gave, in truth, no bad account of them, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which the attack was made. We shall see more instances of this sort of conduct on the part of Napoleon's cavalry; and might, were it necessary, show up even cuirassiers receiving at the halt, and with carabine presented, the charge of braver foes. One case of this sort happened near Ratisbon, under Napoleon's own eyes, on the 20th of April, 1809.

As no history of the Prussian cavalry during the campaigns of Frederick the Second can here be attempted, I must content myself with proving, by a few examples, what well-trained horsemen are capable of achieving when ably led and inspired with a just confidence in their own prowess.

At the battle of Hohenfriedberg, the dragoon regiment of Baireuth drove over twenty-one battalions of infantry, took 4000 prisoners, 66 stands of colours, and five pieces of artillery:—an action, of which Frederick says, truly enough, that it deserves to be written in letters of gold. At Zerndorff, Seidlitz decided the fate of the day by hewing down, with the cavalry, the masses of Russian infantry, before which the Prussian infantry had already

lost ground; thus gaining one of the most sanguinary and most important victories of the Seven Years' War. At Rosbach, twenty squadrons, led by the same heroic commander, headed and crossed the French line of march under cover of the hill that separated the two armies, wheeled up in front of the hostile columns, and then

> "Like the ocean's mighty swing,
> When heaving to the tempest's wing,
> They hurled them on the foe,"

driving the whole of Soubise's army, 50,000 strong, in utter confusion from the ground. Though the events of the war were not likely to furnish another opportunity for such a feat of arms, yet Seidlitz and the cavalry closed the long contest in a manner worthy of their fame, by overthrowing, at Fribourg, seven battalions of infantry, and thus deciding in his favour the last of Frederick's fields.

We have in this brief survey, which brings us down to the Revolution war, been forced to leave unnoticed the action of the Turkish sphahis; for the Austrians and Russians never considered themselves obliged to record the exploits of their enemies; and the Turkish accounts, those at least contained in Von Deize's translation of Resmi Achmet Effendi's "History of the War in 1774," are as laconic on the subject of Moslem victories, and as full of lamentations for the losses of the Faithful, as the most unlucky of their defeated foes could possibly desire.

The only action of Turkish cavalry, bearing upon our immediate subject, that I can relate from good authority, is recorded by Marshal Saxe, and as it is particularly deserving of attention, I shall here repeat it in the Marshal's own words.

"At the battle of Belgrade," says this great soldier,

"I saw two battalions cut to pieces in an instant: the affair happened in the following manner. A battalion of Lorraine and one of Neuperg were posted on a height that we called the battery; and just when a breeze of wind dispersed a fog which had impeded our view, I observed these troops on the brow of the hill, separated frem the rest of the army. Prince Eugene asked me if my sight were good, and who were the cavaliers coming round the hill. I replied, that they were a body of thirty or forty Turks. 'These men are lost,' said the Prince, meaning the two battalions, though I could not perceive that they were attacked, or likely to be so, as I could not see what was beyond the hill. But I galloped towards it at full speed, and at the moment I arrived behind the colours of Neuperg's regiment, I saw both battalions make ready, come to the present, and, at thirty yards, fire a volley at a body of Turks who were rushing in upon them. The volley and the closing were one and the same thing, the two battalions had no time to fly, and were all sabred. Except General Neuperg, who, fortunately for himself was on horseback, an ensign with his colours, who seized the mane of my horse and embarrassed me very much, and two or three soldiers, none escaped; all the rest were cut down within a space of ground that did not measure above thirty or forty yards from front to rear.

At this moment Prince Eugene arrived, almost alone, that is, with the gilded troop (*troupe dorée*) and the Turks retired, I hardly know wherefore: it was here that a shot passed through his"—the Prince's—"sleeve. Some infantry and cavalry having come up, General Neuperg requested that a detachment might be appointed to take care of the clothing, and sentinels were accordingly posted at the four

corners of the ground occupied by these defunct battalions, so that piles of hats, coats and shoes were soon collected. While this was going forward I amused myself in counting the dead, and found that only thirty-two Turks had been killed by the volley of the two battalions, a circumstance that has not tended to augment my respect for the fire of musketry."

No one can well read this curious document without being forcibly struck by its importance; for it not only illustrates the excellence of the present mode of fighting, and the value of the musket and bayonet when compared to the sword; but,—in General Neuperg's alacrity to take care of the old clothes after having sacrificed the soldiers entrusted to his charge,—it shows us the very impress of the genius that so long presided over the destinies of modern armies. When old clothes, or sixpences in any other shape, were to be saved, then were the mighty,—chieftains as well as statesmen,—great in their vocations; but, when the lives of brave men were to be saved, when the toils and sufferings of the soldier were to be alleviated, then it was, Oh! Fortune help thy powerless votaries.

The peace of Hübertsburg, that in 1763 put an end to the Seven Years' War, left the cavalry masters of the field. It had been amply demonstrated that there was nothing in the tactics or arming of the infantry capable of securing them on level ground against the shock of brave and well-commanded horsemen. It remained for the Revolution war, so fertile in military delusions, to give rise to another opinion; not from any greater strength or consistency conferred on the infantry, which, as stated in the first part of this essay, remains exactly where Frederick left it, but simply because men prefer judging from dazzling results to

the trouble of investigating the true causes that brought them about; and the battles of Marengo, Auerstadt, Aspern, and Waterloo, gained by the firmness of the infantry in withstanding the attacks of the cavalry, threw not only past experience into the shade, but occasioned contemporaneous events of minor importance, but far more illustrative of professional principles, to be entirely overlooked.

I now proceed to bring forward a few of those events, trifling in their result, but important as to principle; and shall conclude this paper with a few remarks, explanatory of the causes that occasioned the failure of so many cavalry charges during the late war.

COMBAT OF AVESNE LE SEC.

11th Sept. 1793.

A corps of 8000 French, mostly infantry, having marched out of Cambray, in order to make a demonstration in favour of Quesnoy, then hardly pressed by the Allies, were overtaken near the village of Avesne le sec, by Prince Lichtenstein and Count Belgrade, at the head of four Austrian regiments of cavalry. The French, seeing that an action was inevitable, formed two large squares, between which they placed the whole of their artillery, consisting of twenty guns, and thus posted, they firmly awaited the charge.

Their patience was not put to a long trial, for something of the spirit of former times still animated the Allied cavalry at the commencement of the contest; laurels enough were then reaped to show how noble a wreath might have been formed, had there been a master's hand to guide the work; but none such appeared; and the stray leaves, left unconnected, were soon destined to wither and decay. On this

occasion, however, the Austrians realised every thing that could be expected from brave horsemen; for without awaiting the infantry and artillery that were still far behind, they instantly charged, and though saluted with grape by the French artillery, and received with a volley of musketry fired at less than fifty yards, they overthrew both the squares at the first onset. Two thousand men were taken, and most of the others cut down, for only a few hundred stragglers reached Bouchain and Cambray: the twenty guns, together with five stand of colours, also fell into the hands of the victors. This gallant feat of arms, important here—because the infantry were aided by artillery, stood their ground firmly, and gave their fire at a fair distance—cost the Austrians only two officers and seventy-nine men.

ACTION OF VILLIERS-EN-COUCHE.

24th April, 1793.

On the 23rd of April 1793, the French, to the number of 15,000 men, advanced in three columns from Bouchain towards the Selle. They were met on the following day by Gen. Otto, at the head of ten British and four Austrian squadrons. While part of this force dispersed the French cavalry, four of the Allied squadrons, two British and two Austrian, attacked the infantry, consisting of six battalions, who had formed themsetves into an oblong square, broke them, killed and wounded 900 men, captured 400 more, together with five pieces of cannon; the Allies themselves losing only ninety men in killed and wounded. There was no appearance yet of the new light that has since broken in upon the horses, and rendered them so conscious of the danger to be apprehended from the fire of musketry, as to make them bear their reluctant riders far away from

the bayonets of the infantry; thus forcing, cuirassiers and lancers, to waste their exuberant valour in merely flouting, with swords and flags, the harmless and unresisting air. This great step in the march of mind, was reserved for our own more intellectual period.

BATTLE OF CATEAU CAMBRESIS.

THE 26th of April was still more glorious to the cavalry than the 24th had been, for the English and Austrians rivalled on that day the Prussians of Rosbach, and defeated, by their unaided exertions, the whole of Gen. Chappui's army, which, to the number of 27,000 men had marched from Cambray in order to relieve Landrecies.

The advanced guard of the Austrians having dispersed the cavalry that marched at the head of the left column of the French army, the infantry and artillery immediately drew up between the village of *Audencourt* and the *Cense de Tronguay*, and commenced firing. They were there charged by Prince Schwartzenberg, at the head of the Austrian cuirassiers of Zeschewitz, aided by nine British squadrons. The enemy were completely broken and driven from the field, with the loss of 3000 men, killed, wounded, or taken; twenty-two guns, together with twenty-nine ammunition-waggons, also fell into the hands of the victors.

Whilst this was passing on the right, another French column were advancing towards the left of the Duke of York's army, but attempted to retreat as soon as they learned the defeat of their comrades. Unfortunately for them, however, the laudable and liberal maxim of building a golden bridge for a retiring enemy,—to enable him to return and renew the action with increased means next day,—happened not at the moment to be so fashionable as

it soon afterwards became. The retiring column was therefore pursued, and attacked near Ellencourt, by four English and two Austrian squadrons, who, without any aid from either infantry or artillery, defeated them with the loss of 1000 men, ten guns, and twenty-two ammunition-waggons. Still further towards the left, the hussars of Blankenstein also made a gallant charge, and took eight guns. The loss of the Allied cavalry on this day, was one general, sixteen officers, and 380 men; that of the enemy, 5000 men, and thirty-two pieces of artillery.

AFFAIRS OF EDESHEIM AND KAISERSLAUTERN.

28th May, 13th July, and 20th Sept. 1794.

BLÜCHER'S appearance in the field, as commander of a regiment, already gave proof of the spirit that twenty years afterwards obtained for him at the head of an army, the honourable appellation of "Marshal Forward." It was at Edesheim that this great soldier, whose battle of the Katzbach, passage of the Elbe, and march upon Laon, stand unsurpassed in the annals of modern generalship, first drew the sword, destined in the hour of his country's danger to serve not only as a guide to victory, but as the rallying point of all German energy and patriotism.

A party of French having *debouched* from the village, were attacked by Blücher, at the head of the huzzars of Goltz and the dragoons of Schmettau. The French cavalry were overthrown at the first onset, and the infantry, though they formed a square, experienced no better fate. Three hundred were killed and wounded; an equal number, together with six guns and nine ammunition-waggons, were taken. A second affair, almost similar, took place on the same ground a few weeks afterwards, when Blücher,

at the head of his cavalry, broke into a column that was again attempting to *debouche* from the village of Edesheim, dispersed the whole party, took eighty prisoners, and three guns.

The following is the account he himself gives, in his journal of the campaigns of 1794, of the affair near Kaiserslautern. We preserve, as much as possible, his own phraseology, as it seems something characteristic of the man.

"As soon as I had assembled about eighty hussars and dragoons, I commanded march! at the very time when the enemy's infantry, at least 600 strong, were crossing the plain. The officer, who commanded the enemy's battalion, shewed much countenance; he was on horseback, and kept his men well together. But nothing could intimidate our brave horsemen; we stormed in upon the enemy, and though he opposed us with the bayonet, and made a most determined resistance, we nevertheless broke in," &c.

The entire of the French party were either killed, wounded, or taken.

To the instances here quoted, might be added the defeat of three French regiments of infantry, belonging to the division of Gen. Montrichard, overthrown by the Austrian cavalry on the retreat of the Imperial army from Ulm to Nordlingen, in the fall of the year 1800; also the dispersion of two French squares, broken by the Russian hulans at the battle of Austerlitz; and in like manner the destruction of another French square by the Prussian dragoons of Irving at the battle of Auerstädt, together with the successful charge made by the Russian General Koschin, against the right wing of the French, at the battle of Pultusk. But I pass over these, and other events of a like nature, in order to arrive at a few isolated actions, that,

standing alone, shew more distinctly, and are therefore better calculated to bring out the principle that is here sought to be established.

Major Schill's attempt to call forth and array against the French the patriotism of Germany, during the Austrian war of 1809, is so well known as to render all notice superfluous; but one of the first actions fought during his short and brilliant career, bears too strongly on our present subject to be passed over.

On the 5th May, Schill arrived, at the head of 600 hussars, in the neighbourhood of Todtenburg, not far from Magdeburg, and was there encountered by 1800 French, mostly infantry, supported by two pieces of artillery. Part of this force was stationed on open and accessible ground; the rest were posted behind a ditch, having their flank protected by some garden hedges. Those on the open ground, though formed in squares, were broken by the hussars at the first charge, notwithstanding the steady conduct of the men, who gave their fire at *less than thirty yards;* but those who were protected by the ditch could not be dislodged till part of the cavalry had dismounted, when they were driven into the village. Schill lost on this occasion nine officers and 100 men, principally by his having attempted to force the enclosure before any of his men had dismounted—the French detachment was entirely destroyed. Their commander, Gen. Michaud, in an intercepted letter addressed to the Westphalian Minister of War, Eblé, thus expresses himself on the subject.—"*Ces hussards ne se battent pas comme des soldats ordinaires, mais comme des enragés; ayant rompu et sabré mes quarrés ils firent le reste prisonniers. Venez à mon secour,*" *&c. &c.*

Here Gen. Michaud, very unintentionally, perhaps, lets

us into the real secret of the case. He tells us that these hussars fought, as all men should fight when the sword is once drawn, like "*des enragés*," and not according to the conventional style of modern warfare. Against attacks made with mere conventional vigour, the general's squares would have been good enough: but they proved poor and feeble obstacles indeed, against men who rushed on with patriot ardour, and who, like the Germans that fought this and the actions yet to be mentioned, struck to avenge their country's wrongs. Such men edged not away from a single volley of wretched musketry: on the contrary, all those who escaped its effects, naturally gave spur and rein, and easily bore down, by the mere impulse of their horses, the whole crowded mass of helpless infantry; showing, that a knowledge of duty and firmness of will, are alone required to enable the cavalry to triumph over these boasted formations.

The French infantry performed on this occasion everything that was to be expected from brave men so trained and situated. They stood their ground firmly, fired their only volley at a fair distance, and then, no doubt, presented their bayonets according to rule; but as all this tactical display, which looks so formidable at a review, did not frighten away the hussars, and could not well arrest them, the best of the grenadiers had nothing left but to stoop his fur-capped head and trust to Fortune, the real goddess of modern war. She is a fickle patroness, no doubt, but, if she sometimes delights in humbling the mightiest of her votaries, and thwarting the combinations of strategists and tacticians, she occasionally atones for it by saving from destruction the lowly soldier too often placed, defenceless at her mercy, by laureled chiefs and modern science.

Minerva's reign is past: her sway was in the "days of other years," when men, intended for war, were trained to the use of arms and taught to fight, but we have changed all that, and wisdom disowns us.

ACTION OF GARCI-HERNANDEZ,
23d July, 1812.

The action of Garci-Hernandez presents so clear and brilliant a proof of what resolute and well commanded cavalry can effect against the best of modern infantry, that I cannot, in justice to the cause here advocated, do better than give a detailed account of the entire transaction. We have the best possible authority to guide us in the recital, for Sir Julius Hartmann has published, in the Hanoverian Military Magazine, a description of the action, compiled from the journals and memoranda kept by some of the principal regimental and staff officers present on the occasion, as well as from the verbal statements made to him by others. We only take the facts as recorded in the German account, without translating it. Sir Julius differs from the view here taken of the point of tactics under discussion: he says that infantry should be able to resist cavalry, but abstains from assigning the reasons for his belief.

On the morning after the battle of Salamanca, a strong rear guard of the enemy, consisting, besides cavalry and artillery, of four regiments of infantry, was found posted near the village of Garci-Hernandez. These troops stood on high, steep, and shingly ground;—the infantry were on the right, the cavalry on the left, the artillery in the centre. Two brigades of British cavalry, General Anson's light brigade, and the heavy brigade of the King's

German Legion, were advancing toward the point occupied by the French. The march of the British led through a ravine, formed by low and stony hills, the road at the bottom of which was not only broken, but so narrow that the cavalry could only advance by threes, being forced besides, to make frequent halts in front, to enable the rear of the column to close-up.

On issuing from the defile General Anson's brigade immediately took ground to the right, in order to gain room for its own formation, as well as to make way for the troops that followed; a movement which was not in the least impeded by the enemy, who, in the most obliging manner possible gave the attacking forces full leisure to make every possible preparation.

When the head of the heavy brigade reached the outlet of the pass, General Bock received orders to attack; and immediately commanded the regiments of his own brigade to form up in consequence. But no sooner was the first squadron in line, than, without giving the others time to join, he placed himself with all his staff, at its head, and led it right gallantly against the French cavalry, while the rest of his troops were still struggling through the defile. The French horsemen, already turned, and partly thrown by Anson's brigade, did not await the charge, but fled the field. Their guns they contrived to carry along with them; but the infantry was left to the care of tactics and of providence: and it was owing to the mercy of the latter that some of the soldiers escaped to attest the value of the former.

The flight of the French cavalry brought the infantry into play; and two regularly formed squares were soon discovered to the left of where the cavalry had passed in

their charge; one of these had even opened a smart fire on General Bock's first squadron, but without arresting its progress or changing its direction. When, however, the two other squadrons of the first regiment had got formed, it was observed to Captain Von Deken, who commanded the 3rd or left squadron, that he would probably suffer some loss from the fire of the nearest French square already mentioned. "If I am to suffer the loss," said this gallant officer, "I will reap the benefit also;" and no sooner had he reached to the level of the height on which the enemy were posted, than, wheeling to the left, he galloped right down upon them. Arrived within about a hundred yards of the foe, a volley fired by two ranks killed him and brought down a good many of the men; but Captain Gleichen instantly replaced his fallen leader, and the charge proceeded. Within some forty yards of the square, a second, though less destructive volley, was received; it arrested not the troops: but when they arrived at the points of the bayonets,—doubts, and a moment's pause, seemed to ensue,—it was only of an instant's duration, but it was perilous nevertheless. To plunge, sword in hand, into the midst of the dark and compact mass of foes, bristling with presented bayonets, seemed at first, an action above ordinary daring. Hesitation would have brought defeat in its train: but some shots were fired, a horse fell, and rolled with its rider in among the throng; this gave a forward impulse to the rest; a single dash of spurs was then sufficient to ensure victory: the entire of the infantry were instantly rode over, captured or sabred.

Captain Riegenstein, who commanded the second squadron, finding that the French cavalry had already been defeated, and hearing of the gallant and successful charge

made on one square of their infantry, proceeded immediately to attack the other, which was as completely thrown as the first, and with considerable less loss:—a brave example once set, soon finds followers.

While these combats were going on, the 2d regiment of heavy dragoons had formed at the foot of the hill, where it remained in reserve. But some French cavalry having, after the dispersion of the squares, again shewn themselves on the high ground, probably with a view to collect or protect the fugitives, this reserve ascended the height, attacked and threw these fresh adversaries. In following up this success, the third squadron, under Captain Marshalk, together with half of the second squadron, came upon a third square of infantry. Victory ruled the hour, and these new foes were no sooner discovered than charged and broken. The same troops, immediately afterwards, fell upon a fourth square, which they also attacked. But here bravery was foiled; and this last charge failed, owing, not merely to the exhausted state of the horses and the reduced number of men, but to the high and difficult ground on which the enemy was posted.

Here we find three bodies of the best continental infantry, regularly formed and having, from the slow advance of the cavalry through the defile, had ample time for preparation and for the selection of the best ground within their reach; overthrown at the very first onset, though the men did their duty bravely and well. Two of the squares were attacked by single squadrons only, and even the two last by no more than a squadron and a half. The cavalry had 90 odd, say 100, men *hors-de-combat* on this occasion, but they inflicted on the enemy a loss of 1900 men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. If we estimate the strength of

the French squares at 700 men each, for some men would naturally escape; and if we suppose the squadrons of the Legion to have had about 85 effective troopers each, and this is a high estimate, considering that the campaign, of nearly two months' duration, had been a very active one—we find that 700 ready and prepared tactical infantry, could not, in open day and on fair field, resist 80, or 100, bold and resolute horsemen; and that, in a combat *a outrance*, (for such, cavalry and infantry combats may be termed) the 700 could, at the most, inflict on the 100 assailants, a loss of from twenty to five-and-twenty men!

This, in fact, is overrating the effect produced by the fire of the vanquished infantry; because it includes the effect of the fire delivered by the square which resisted, as well as the fire directed against General Bock's first squadron when charging the French cavalry; and it includes whatever effect may have been produced by the sabres of that cavalry. Properly stated, the case should stand thus:—four squares of the best French infantry, for a rear-guard would, of course, be composed of the best troops, amounting at least to 3000 men, were attacked by three squadrons and a half of cavalry that could not, at the most, count 300 men, and three of the squares were defeated with a loss to the infantry of nearly 2000 men, while the victorious cavalry lost only 100 men. As it was, in every respect, a fair field, and as duty was done on all hands, let any unbiased person say which is the most formidable weapon, the sword or the musket? The many failures of the cavalry can prove nothing, until it is shewn that duty was bravely and ably done. Herodotus tells us (Melpomene, chap. 29) that the Scythian cavalry, so renowned of old, fled at the mere braying of the asses in the Persian camp; yet no one ever

advanced the circumstance as a proof that the music of the long-eared race, great as the power of the race avowedly is, was in itself sufficient to overthrow entire squadrons; though the reasoning set up in favour of the infantry would apply with equal force to the long-eared victors of the Tanais. Both have frightened away cavalry; but it has not yet been shewn that either possesses the power to fight them away.

COMBAT OF THE GOERDE.

16*th September*, 1813.

The gallant action performed near the Goerde by the 3rd hussars of the King's German Legion, soon after the rupture of the armistice in 1813, though less known than the affair of Hernandez, is not less deserving of notice and applause.

A corps of 9000 French, with fifteen pieces of artillery, were overtaken on the banks of the Goerde, near Danneberg, by the cavalry of General Walmoden's army. Part of the enemy's infantry were protected by uneven ground, the rest formed squares on the open heath, and were there attacked by swarms of Cossacks, and by the cavalry of the Russian German Legion. These attacks were all repulsed with ease; and as the evening was closing in fast, and the German infantry still distant, the General yielded to the request of the commanding officer of the 3rd hussars to allow that regiment, which as the *élite* of the army had been kept in reserve, to make another effort. The charge, being made in the manner becoming soldiers of such character and distinction, was completely successful: the whole of the enemy's infantry, posted on open ground, was overthrown, the guns taken, and night

alone saved the rest of the corps from entire destruction.

As the success of the Hanoverians placed the previous failures of the other troops in no very brilliant light, it was natural to expect that the less fortunate parties would discover some good cause for such different results, and the device they fell upon, proved, it must be allowed, an ingenious one. It was asserted, namely, that the hussars owed their better success solely to the superiority of their English horses: the said horses having leaped fairly over the bayonets of the kneeling ranks, a feat to which the German and Russian horses were avowedly unequal. The story is so far of value, as it shows, what is besides well attested, that the French stood their ground firmly: in other respects, the action is of too gallant a nature to require any aid from the marvellous.

I close this brief and imperfect sketch, with the last and brightest of these isolated actions.

AMBUSCADE OF HAYNOU.

26th April, 1813.

The Allied army, instead of following, on their retreat after the battle of Bautzen, the road leading directly East towards the Oder, turned suddenly to the south, for the purpose of approaching Schweidnitz and the Bohemian frontier. Beyond Haynou, on the Deichsel, where this conversion to the right was effected, they entered upon a very flat and open country, singularly studded from distance to distance with wooded knolls and hillocks, and well adapted, therefore, to conceal an ambushed foe. Ground and circumstances so favourable for the employ-

ment of the numerous, and hitherto neglected, cavalry of the Allies, could not escape the all-observing military eye of Blücher, who commanded the rear-guard, and who determined at once to make the most of them: Fortune, as usual, favoured the bold.

On the 26th of April, Gen. Ziethen was directed to give way, as before, on the advance of the French, and to retreat with the last division of the rear-guard, along the high road leading towards Schweidnitz; whilst Colonel Dolfs was posted with twenty squadrons and three brigades of horse-artillery behind a woody hillock, to the right of the same road, about three miles from Michaelsdorff, a village situated somewhat in advance of Haynou. This officer was ordered to fall upon the enemy, as soon as they should have got fairly beyond the reach of the gardens and enclosures. The signal for the attack was to be the firing of a windmill on the height of Baudmansdorff, from whence the low ground is easily discernible.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon, before Gen. Maison's division, forming the advanced guard of the French army, crossed the bridge of Haynou, and it is understood that the General had some scruples about adventuring into the open plain, but that Marshal Ney's positive orders forced him on to his fate. Be that as it may, it must still appear strange, that no patroles were sent out to flank and precede the main body of the division; a piece of negligence that can only be accounted for, by the security with which habitual success, and the general timidity of their enemies, had inspired the French army, and for which they paid pretty dearly both here, and at Arayo-de-Molino.

The main body of the pursuing infantry had no sooner cleared the village of Michaelsdorff, and advanced about

2000 yards into the plain, than the signal was given, and Colonel Dolfs issued forth at the head of his squadrons, leaving the artillery, who never came into action, to take their chance. As the distance he had to traverse was rather better than a mile and a half, the French infantry had time to form themselves into squares, and though their cavalry fled without striking a blow, the artillery were enabled to unlimber and fire with grape on the advancing Prussians. But nothing could arrest these brave horsemen; for whilst Dolfs, with the leading regiment, threw himself on the main body of the enemy, the East-Prussian cuirassiers turned the village of Michaelsdorff, and attacked another detachment, that was still in the rear: the whole were literally swept from the plain. A few found shelter in the houses of Michaelsdorff, whilst the pursuing cavalry were cutting down others in the very streets of the village; many were driven headlong into the Deichsel, whose deep and rapid waters resigned not their prey; all the rest were killed, wounded, or taken. Eight battalions, with eighteen pieces of artillery, were present on the ground when the action commenced, and in a quarter of an hour afterwards not a single infantry soldier remained in a defensive posture, and every gun was in the hands of the victors. This gallant feat of arms, unsurpassed by any cavalry action of modern times, cost the Prussian army only fifty-four men in killed and wounded; the sixteen officers that must be added to the number, prove how nobly these brave troops were led.

Now, might not the question at issue be rested on this single action? Here was the advanced guard of a victorious army, composed no doubt, as such guards generally are, of the best troops; they were led by an officer of expe-

rience and distinction, and were certainly in a state of preparation, as they were pursuing an enemy who was in sight. The artillery were enabled to unlimber and to fire, so that there could be no want of time for the infantry to form squares; yet was the whole force, in open day and on level ground, swept away at the first onset, and that with a loss to the assailants of only seventy men and officers killed and wounded!!! When such results shall fail to carry conviction of the insufficiency of tactics, in enabling the infantry soldier to withstand the charge of bold and resolute horsemen, then we may truly say, that like the age of chivalry, the age of cavalry is also past.

It will be remarked, that none of the victories here quoted were gained by the French cavalry, who so long filled the world with noise and wonder: and also that four of these successful charges were made by or under the immediate orders of Blucher, a man whose dauntless energy scorned all conventional *grades* of fighting, and who, when he struck, always struck home.

Let us now ask, whether there is anything in the brief survey of cavalry-warfare here taken, to justify the opinion at present so generally entertained of the inability of that arm to contend successfully upon open ground against modern infantry, even in a perfect state of preparation? Has it not been proved, on the contrary, that horsemen have invariably succeeded, when properly led and inspired with just confidence in their own strength and prowess? And can it well be otherwise, when the inefficiency of infantry-tactics and training, as shown in the first part of this essay, are fully considered? It has, however, been maintained, that the cavalry, after galloping over *embarrassed* ground, suffering besides some loss from the fire of

the infantry, and their horses being terrified, will not be in a state of order fit to make the attack. If the infantry cannot meet the cavalry on perfectly *level ground;* if they are forced to calculate on *embarrassed ground* for security, it is a virtual abandonment of the case, or confession that they cannot trust to their arms and exertions, but must trust to extraneous circumstances for life and victory.

I am willing to give the infantry every advantage they may derive from the most perfect state of preparation, but then fair galloping ground, like the ground at Fuentes d'Onor, Guinaldo, or Waterloo, — we want no bowling-greens,—must be granted to the cavalry, and on that proviso I now proceed to try the question.

One single successful charge, instead of fifty, made by the cavalry against infantry in a state of preparation, and fairly doing their duty, would, of course, be sufficient to establish the important fact, that the failures must not be ascribed to the horses, for what horses have done once, they will, if equally well rode, do again. They are urged by rein and spur, and are not influenced by the hopes, fears and opinions, that exercise such sway over the actions of men. That the noise, fire, and smoke of musketry does not terrify well-trained horses, was known, and may be considered as proved, by the examples here cited; and that they will not, when boldly rode, occasion any confusion, seriously detrimental, may also be established. It is not easy for front-rank horses, at a gallop, to perceive, owing to their onward progress, the fall of their companions; the rear-rank horses, no doubt, will see this, and may even be overthrown by the fall of those in front, but their tendency is to follow their leaders, and all naturally close in, so that their very instinct helps to preserve a certain degree of

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order. How easily horses are familiarised to the fire of musketry, we know from Marshal Saxe; the highest authority perhaps, that can be quoted. In giving directions on the subject, he says:—"*Il's sy accoutumeront si bien au bout d'un mois, qu'ils irait mettre le nez sur le bout du fusil sans s'etonner.*" It must also be recollected, that simultaneous action and mutual support, and not parade dressing, are the real objects of order; parade accuracy is sought after, because, with equal qualities, the troops who move best on parade, will move with the greatest precision in the field; and no well-trained body of cavalry can lose this *sufficient* degree of order whilst galloping over the short space of ground intervening between them and the infantry, when the latter give their fire.

More than one volley is, of course, entirely out of the question, because the hurry and anxiety of loading for a second fire, would lead to unsteadiness, certain of producing defeat: the greater the distance at which the fire is given, the less will be its effect: if it is reserved, the shorter will be the distance of danger the cavalry can have to traverse. Suppose the advancing squadrons to receive the fire of their enemies at fifty yards, will any one believe that those of the horsemen who escape the effects,—nine-tenths at least,—can so far out-gallop each other in traversing this short space of ground, as to deprive themselves of the aid and support of their comrades? And that too in attacking infantry, whose crowded formation renders them all but motionless, unable to assist each other, or to avoid the shock of the horses, and totally defenceless after their single fire is once given? Can this be seriously maintained? There was probably some confusion in the ranks of the 57th regiment, when three-fourths of the men and

officers of that gallant corps fell on the field of Albuera; and when one half of Colonel Brown's flank battalion went down, in their onset against a mass of French infantry at Barrossa, the chances are that the brave survivors did not altogether preserve the regularity of parade movement. Yet they did not edge away from the fire of their enemies, they went on, and met in conquest the reward of their valour. Why should cavalry, who can only be exposed to a single volley of musketry, be justified in turning back? That I am not altogether ignorant of the existence of bayonets—for who has not heard of them both in prose and verse?—may be seen in the first part of the essay. But arms guiltless as yet of the blood of *fighting* men, wielded besides by soldiers never taught to use, or even to think of using them, and forming, when fixed to the muskets, such clumsy, rickety, and unhandy zig-zags, that they require to be only once seen and poised in order to be fairly appreciated, can never be urged as presenting serious obstacles to bold, confident, and skilful horsemen. Had the sailors and infantry soldiers of England blenched at toys like bayonets, where would now have been the fame and independence of their country?

If the cavalry in charging infantry do their duty, one of three things must follow, as a matter of course; either they must fall by the fire of the musketry, be arrested by the bayonets, or they must overthrow the opposing ranks. Now, without again reverting to the few musket-shots that tell, as shown in the first part of this essay, we know very well that, to the utter astonishment of many officers present, entire volleys were fired at Waterloo* and at Fuente-

* See in the appendix to Sir Walter Scott's Life of Napoleon, the admirable account of the battle, written by Captain Pringle of the

de-Guinaldo, without apparently bringing down a man, however many might have been hit. We also know, that not a single one of the enemy's horsemen perished on the bayonets of the kneeling ranks in either of these actions; and it is, of course, perfectly evident, that a horse at full speed, if killed even by the projecting bayonets—which is possible, though not probable,—must still, by his very impulse, overthrow all the files opposed to him, and thus make an opening for those that follow.

As a proof, I beg to quote the annexed passage from the Edinburgh Weekly Journal of the 26th Oct. 1832.

"On Wednesday forenoon, a horse and gig run off at full speed down Forres-street, and instead of turning at the foot of the street, it ran right up to the garden-railing of Moray-place, through which, to the amazement of every one, it made its way in perfect safety, leaving the gig on the outside. The circumstance is the more remarkable, as the railing appears to be very strong: it consists of stout upright cast-iron rails, firmly bound together by cross-rails, about five feet from the ground, which are strengthened by dwarf-rails fastened to them, about two feet up. The horse, on making his *entrée* into the garden, snapped through four of the tall rails below the upper fastening, leaving entire the ornamental frame-work above, and forming, as it were, a triumphal arch!"

Would a few files of infantry present a firmer obstacle? How then, it will be asked, has it happened that the bravest of the continental cavalry so frequently failed in

Royal Engineers. Speaking of the repulse of one charge of French cavalry he says, "and it is not easy to believe how few fell, only one officer and two men, though, no doubt, many were wounded. Many squares fired at the distance of thirty yards with no better effect."

their attacks against steady and well-prepared infantry? Simply because opinion, the rise of which I shall not here attempt to trace, was against them, and, as before stated, they had no commander capable of doing justice to their power. Mere courage was not sufficient for this: it required a man capable of estimating the strength of the troops he was to lead, and whose example and precepts should have made them act up to *his* estimate of that strength: one whose single opinion should, with his subordinates, have outweighed received opinion, and who, in addition to courage, possessed also a quick and fiery genius, capable of perceiving and seizing the proper opportunity of acting with the lightning speed and strength constituting the real force of the cavalry. Thus commanded, a few hundred sabres have sometimes achieved in half an hour, that success for which twenty thousand muskets had for a whole day been vainly expending their miserable and ill-directed fire. To perform such deeds, however, the horsemen must be cheered by hope and animated by example; but against prepared infantry they are now generally hopeless, and led in a hopeless spirit: and little, indeed, can be expected from the feeble heart of man, when its best support in danger and strongest impulse to action are both removed.

It is no doubt a splendid sight, when bugle sound and trumpet clang send onward to the charge a gallant line of horsemen: their plumes wave, their sabres gleam, the very earth is shaken by the thunder of their horses' hoofs, and, like the tornado in its progress, they seem destined to carry every thing before them in their way. But the infantry to be attacked is prepared; the close and serried mass, bristling with arms, from which the fires of death are every

moment expected to flash, is imposing; and the motionless stillness, with which tried soldiers wait the attack, has an air of stern and confident resolve that is chilling to ordinary assailants. The horsemen, not expecting to succeed, see only death before them; and busy fancy pictures at such times, even to the most wretched, stores of future happiness about to be sacrificed in a hopeless contest. The heart cools, and the speed is gradually slackened, instead of being augmented as the charge advances. If the dread of dishonour still keeps the men from turning back, the belief in certain destruction also prevents them from going on; but the middle way, so dear to mediocrity, whether of talent or courage, is at hand, and no sooner does the firing begin than the whole of the plume-crested troop, vanquished before a shot has told, open to the right and left—fly, with brandished sabres, in wild confusion round the square, instead of rushing down upon it—receive the fire of four sides to avoid the fire of one, and, without striking a single blow for victory, resign with loss and disgrace a contest that, by courage and confidence, might have been successfully terminated at the expense of a few bayonet scratches.

I appeal to the officers who were present in the squares at Waterloo, Quatre-bras, and Guinaldo, — to those, I mean, whose clearness of mind and tranquillity of imagination allowed them to see what their visual organs actually presented to them; for there are many brave and conscientious men who see only what they are told to see, or what they think they ought to see,—whether this is not an exact history of the best of the charges made by the French cavalry in those memorable actions. I say the best charges, for on many occasions the horseman

actually halted, or turned, as soon as the fire began, leaving a few individuals to dash forward and shake their sabres at the adversaries with whom they dared not close. And yet this is called charging, and by such foolery is the power of the cavalry to be estimated, and the infantry of England, the gallant and the brave, must still trust for victory only to the chance of similar conduct on the part of future foes, instead of trusting to those high qualities that, backed by an efficient system of tactics, would ensure them success in every species of contest.

That an attack, on steady and prepared infantry, is "a trying affair," may be safely granted; but what are all attacks in war? What are assaults of difficult breaches, of steep positions; what are escalades, and what, in the field, is the profession of arms, but a constant risking of life and limb, for the "bubble reputation?" The slow movements of infantry expose the advancing soldier to a long continued fire from all the distant and cowardly engines of modern tactics: round, grape, shells and musket-balls, are showered upon him in most liberal profusion; but, in attacking infantry, the cavalry soldier can only be exposed to a single volley of ill-aimed musketry, which he must learn to set at defiance, unless he is to be looked upon as composed of inferior clay to the humble musketteer.

The difficulty of finding leaders, answering to the description given above, and capable of commanding in such attacks, may also be urged against me: nor shall I evade the question. I confess, it is not given to every one to call forth the spirit of energy, of which daring, confident, and well-led men are capable; it is for the bold and the chivalrous alone, to make the warriors bosoms swell with the hopes of

glory and success. I allow it is no easy task, to guide the storm when raised, to direct the living tempest of a charge, set at nought the deadly fire of the exploding volcanos and plunge into the very midst of levelled muskets and presented bayonets. But the profession makes these demands upon its followers; and, whoever assumes the military garb, must come prepared for the achievement of such actions: as it is on his readiness, to "do and dare," that the soldier founds his claim to honour and distinction.

The personal courage necessary to the performance of these deeds of chivalry is not, and never has been, wanting in the British army,—witness the far more dangerous services performed on countless occasions,—it is the moral courage that has, at times, been wanting, and is likely enough to be wanting again, in a profession that holds out no encouragement to knowledge and application. Numbers of gallant men who would personally have defied the wildest dangers that war can conjure up, have shared in the fatal opinion we are here combating, and would naturally, however brave and daring, have exposed their soldiers to repulse and defeat, from merely doubting the possibility of achieving success. Moral courage, which in the ranks of war is a hundred times more rare than personal courage, can only,—unless where it is mere presumption, or a callous indifference to the evils that may arise from error and misconduct,—be founded on the conviction of what can, and cannot, be effected by men and arms. Some persons arrive at this conviction by slow degrees and laborious calculation; the inspiration of genius makes it flash, lightning like, on the minds of others; but knowledge must still form the conductor which can alone bring it home to the understanding; and knowledge is not valued or encouraged in the army.

Once for all: in attacking accessible infantry, the cavalry must throw doubts and hesitation aside, the moment that spurs are dashed in chargers' flanks; from that instant they must see only victory and honour before them—infamy and defeat behind: they must

> "Come as the winds come, when
> Forests are rended;
> Come as the waves come, when
> Navies are stranded."

And, coming on thus, where are the means of resistance that can enable modern infantry to withstand the fury of the shock? Their fire and bayonets?—earth is not deep enough to hide from disgrace the soldier who should shrink from a single volley of miserable musketry, or recoil from feeble and useless bayonets—the bloodless toys of childish tacticians!

ON TACTICS.

PART III.

Est genus unum
Stultitiæ nihilum metuanda timentis; ut ignes,
Ut rupes, fluviosque in campo obstare queratur:
Alterum et huic varium et nihilo sapientius, ignes
Per medios fluviosque ruentis.

Horace, lib ii. Sat. 3.

GENERAL RECAPITULATION.

GREECE occupied itself in time of peace with war as a science. The proper use of arms, just theories of formations and of marches, the principles according to which they were to be applied, together with the mode of conducting war, and providing against its various casualties, belonged to those branches of knowledge that every good citizen was expected to be acquainted with, and which were taught accordingly by regular masters.

Rome was not so enlightened in this respect. The Roman citizen learnt, indeed, to throw the dart, to use the sword, to raise works, to perform long marches, and to carry heavy burthens; and thus trained, took the field,

individually, a better soldier than the Greek; but the higher branches of the science were entirely overlooked; the Republic blindly entrusted the command of its armies to whatever talents or experience those might possess on whom such high offices devolved. Thus, a Sempronius, a Varro, a Mummius and others, all illiterate and barbarous as the senate that appointed them, — an inexperienced Lucullus, a Cæsar, who himself acknowledged that he had never done anything,—were sent forth at the head of the legions, in the good hope that, if they wanted theory, the chances of war would, nevertheless, present them with opportunities for employing to advantage the well-trained soldiers placed at their disposal.

During a long succession of martial ages, and under a government constantly at war, many of the leaders so selected naturally proved themselves men of the highest talents; a far greater number owed their success to the gallantry of the soldiers, and to the admirable system of organization and discipline that pervaded the Roman armies. Such men purchased, with the blood of their subordinates, the spoils, triumphs, and renown, justly due to high military genius alone. Yet neither the bravery nor the skill of the legionaries, which were never surpassed in the ancient world, saved the Republic from mourning the loss of entire armies, sacrificed by the presumption of a Flaminius and the folly of a Crassus.

During the dark ages there was no science to learn; and, from the first revival of the art, down to our own time, the idea has pretty generally prevailed that a knowledge of war could only be acquired in war. Those who had served, flattered themselves, therefore, that they were already masters of the subject; whilst those who had not

been in the field, consoled themselves with the belief that they also would acquire an equal degree of knowledge whenever chance should furnish them with the requisite experience. It never occurred to such men that the military knowledge acquired in the field alone must be purchased at the expense of "human bones," and can, at the best, be only imperfect. War is a time of action, and for the application, far more than the acquisition of knowledge; and those who do their duty towards their country and their profession, must bring with them into the field as much science and as much of the habit and power of thought as can be gathered from the experience of those who have gone before them. It is not in the lists that the champion must be trained and instructed; he must bring science with him to the combat, and then practice and experience will improve his skill, and confidence will nerve his arm.

But in our time and country these views have not prevailed. We have profited neither by the theory of the Greeks nor the practical ability of the Romans. We have not been warned by the disasters which the weak points of their different formations drew down upon those ancient nations, nor by the losses occasionally sustained by our own and other tactical armies, when contending against adversaries who, from accident, skilful leading, or from some peculiar mode of warfare, happened to strike at one of the many weak points of the Prussian system of tactics.

The term Prussian system, is used that we may not allow ourselves to be deceived by the new names applied to old practices, for we are still, after the lapse of a century, and at the expiration of a war carried on for five-and-twenty years with unparalleled fierceness in every quarter of the globe, following the system originally introduced

into the Prussian army by the Prince of Anhalt-Dessau, and subsequently improved by Frederick II. Either the science had already attained to perfection under that celebrated monarch, or the great masters of the age of intellect have not been great enough to advance it a single step. And it is indeed no easy matter to perfect or advance a system founded upon charcoal and saltpetre. Epaminondas himself, were he to rise from the dead, would be amazed to see the soldiers of his wedge, or *embolon*, struck mangled to the ground by the fire of batteries placed upon distant heights. Human intrepidity must rise above its usual level to remain calm and collected under a storm of these artificial thunderbolts, more destructive than those of nature itself.

In the first and second part of this Essay, an attempt was made to point out the insufficiency of modern tactics, particularly as contrasted with the qualities of British soldiers, as well as the utter helplessness in which the present system of arming and training must necessarily leave the infantry, when encountered, on level ground, by bold and resolute horsemen. Opinions so much at variance with the military maxims of the day could not be expected to pass altogether unchallenged; and these Essays have, in consequence, been honoured with some attention, as well as criticism, both in our own and in foreign countries. The arguments in support of the present system, formerly published in the United Service Journal, were replied to at the time; and I now deem it right, before proceeding to other subjects, briefly to go over the objections more generally urged against the views taken in these papers. I shall select, for this purpose, the article on tactics that appeared in the Caledonian Mercury of the 19th of July, 1832, as it

embraces not only all that other writers have advanced against me, but also gives,—what is so very rare in modern controversy—a clear analysis of the opinions under review. I ascribe the critique to the acute and learned author of the admirable articles "Army" and "Battle" in the seventh edition of the Encyclopædia.

I shall first give the reviewer's statement, on which I shall have to offer a few remarks of my own, and shall conclude the subject with some additional observations in support of the arguments already brought forward.

"Major Mitchell, &c. &c., has published in the United Service Journal, two Essays on Tactics; one of which has for its object to show, that the general system of tactics at present acted upon is defective in various essential points, and particularly in the non-developement of the energies of men in close combat, and the tendency (1) to trust to strategical combinations and manœuvres, rather than to put the issue to the speedy and decisive arbitrement of battle sword in hand; whilst the purport of the other is to prove, both from principle and facts, that cavalry, when properly led, are capable of overthrowing infantry in any formation. With regard to the first of these treatises, we have only to say, that we agree entirely in Major Mitchell's views, in as far as these are merely of a practical nature, and that we consider his exposition of the defects of the present tactical system as deserving of deep and earnest meditation.

"No attention whatever, or at least next to none, is paid to the training of the soldier in his capacity of an individual; no effort is made to develope his fighting qualities, to teach him to depend on his own energies, or to familiarize him with the idea of that species of combat which, in the case of men naturally brave, robust, vigorous, and

persevering, is sure to prove decisive. He is armed with a clumsy and not very manageable weapon, adapted chiefly to distant fighting; he is taught to depend not on himself, but on the mass of which he constitutes a unit; the object of the discipline to which he is subjected, is to convert him into a sort of living machine, capable of moving or acting only as he is impelled; there is nothing to excite his enthusiasm, nor to produce that high and chivalrous daring, under the influence of which death loses its terrors, and victory flashes in living colours on the soul of the warrior; he stands to shoot or be shot, as chance may determine; the force of moral causes is destroyed; and when his formation is disordered, he is lost. He has no reliance upon, no resource in, himself. He is merely one of a disciplined mob, and when the coherence is dissolved, he is at the mercy of any assailant. One great branch of military instruction is neglected. The mass is carefully disciplined, but the individual is forgotten; and, as a natural part of the same system, he is not provided with any means of action or defence, except collectively—and even these are bad.

"The second essay, which has for its object to show that, under the actual system, cavalry, when properly led, are capable of overthrowing infantry in any formation, is not less deserving of attention than the first, though the views which the author here labours to establish are more at variance with received opinions than those regarding the general character of modern tactics. At the same time, his induction is, in many respects, very striking, and some of the facts stated seem to warrant conclusions more favourable to the power of cavalry, when opposed to infantry, than have been recently sanctioned by military writers

of talents and experience (2). Major Mitchell, however, rests too much on detached examples, where accident and surprise on one side, or unprecedented daring on the other, may have led to unexpected results (3); and he has not examined, as we think he ought to have done, that still more numerous class of instances where the efforts of cavalry against infantry have been foiled, notwithstanding the attack of the former was made under every advantage. The account, in short, is not equally balanced; one side of it only is brought prominently forward; and although the individual cases specified are, for the most part, accurately stated, circumstances most material to the right understanding of the point at issue are often unconsciously omitted. Good cavalry, for instance, will always succeed against bad infantry; and, on the other hand, steady, well-disciplined infantry will uniformly repulse indifferent cavalry. But what safe conclusion can be drawn from cases of either kind? The contending parties are not *in pari casu*.

"To make out his point, Major Mitchell must establish that, upon equal terms, and in the open field, no infantry whatever can resist the shock of a cavalry charge delivered in compact order, and with the requisite energy and determination. But has he done so? (4). He has proved, we think, that cavalry can do *more* than they have hitherto effected; but he has not shown that they are capable of accomplishing *this*. It is easy to theorise, and the Major has done so skilfully; but he almost always confines his attention to isolated cases. A single square may be broken; but where there are numerous squares, the success in one instance would only accelerate the destruction of the assailants, who, disordered by their very victory, would

fall an easy prey to the musketry and artillery of the surrounding squares, as happened at Waterloo.

"Accordingly it may be stated as a general fact that cannot be disputed, that cavalry, however excellent and enterprising, have never, in any instance, been able to make a serious impression on veteran infantry in close formation, and prepared to receive them. The Mamelukes were allowed to be the finest body of horse in the world; yet they failed in their attack on the French army under Napoleon, at the battle of the Pyramids, although they rushed on like 'a living tempest,' at full speed, and were headed by Mourad, the bravest and most enterprising of all the Beys. This was perhaps the most desperate charge executed by cavalry in modern times: it was made with the fury of a hurricane from the desert, and persevered in with a determination to conquer or perish; yet, although some of the squares were broken by the violence of the shock, the attack completely failed; and these brave horse were driven from the field with the loss of near half their numbers. They could make no serious impression on the tried veterans of the army of Italy.

"Kleber's twelve hundred infantry resisted for nearly as many hours all the efforts of eighteen thousand Turkish horse at Mount Lebanon, and finally disengaged themselves without any great loss. At Smolensko, the Russian army, then under the able command of Barclay de Tolly, retired in squares, followed by the French cavalry, under Murat, which repeatedly dashed at them in the gallantest manner possible; but, though animated by the chivalrous example of their heroic leader, the latter were unable to make almost any impression on them. Each square seemed a blazing ball of fire; and as the retreat was conducted

with admirable coolness and in perfect order, the squares mutually supporting each other, it was found impossible to approach them. Why has Major Mitchell neglected these and hundreds of similar examples that might be quoted? It is not by taking instances on one side, and omitting altogether those on the other, that any induction can be rendered either satisfactory or conclusive. Both sets of cases must be carefully analysed and compared (5), before any inference can fairly be drawn from them; and proper allowances must also be made for accidents, surprises, and inequalities in discipline, numbers, and moral force, which are altogether left out of view in his statement.

"We agree with all that he says against the bayonet, which is one of the clumsiest, worst-contrived, worst-balanced and most unhandy weapons that soldiers were ever provided withal; but with all its disadvantages, it is manifestly formidable in a steady hand, accustomed to use it; and, although there is great room for improvement, it cannot be denied that it has done good service (6). The Major condemns the conventional mode of fighting, and most justly; it is open to all sorts of objections. But in a question like that which we are considering, more attention should be paid to facts than to theories, however plausible, and however ably supported (7).

"But we must allow our gallant friend, if we may use the freedom so to call him, to speak for himself. We repeat that his essay is equally curious, interesting, and instructive, and that many of his suggestions are deserving of the most serious consideration. Major Mitchell," &c &c.

This critique is certainly ably and cleverly written: let us now see how far the reviewer's objections will stand the test of close investigation. We shall, for clearness' sake, print the extracts in italics.

(1) " *To trust to strategical combinations and manœuvres, rather than put the issue to the speedy and decisive arbitrement of battle, sword in hand.*"

It is, of course, the duty of a commander to spare the lives of his soldiers, and to employ bloodless manœuvre instead of battle, whenever it can be done with effect; but this pretended trusting to science and manœuvre has, in modern times, been little more than an opening for that mental cowardice which has so strongly characterised modern warfare. The fear of generals, who never ventured to strike home, has constantly led to long, sanguinary, and fruitless combats, and to protracted campaigns that occasioned, ultimately, more bloodshed and misery than the most splendid victories of former times. Even the greatest of the Continental battles lasted entire days; they were fought for the possession of posts or villages on which the world's fate seemed to depend, or by swarms of skirmishers only, while armies remained in reserve, literally to feed the fire—to come, like the wounded Curiatii, successively, instead of simultaneously, into action; and above all, to save the fame of their mighty leader from too severe a shock whenever the goddess of fortune remained deaf to the prayers of her votaries, though uttered in the dying groans of idly-sacrificed thousands: one bold onset would have been worth all this strategy a hundred times over.

(2) " *Than have been recently sanctioned by military writers of talents and experience.*"

Who are those writers? Napier is an historian, and says, perhaps, too little about tactics; Gleig, Jones, and Hamilton, cannot, in mere popular narratives, be expected to enter into such discussions. As to the French writers,

Marbot, Jomini and Rogniat, what new principle have they established, or where is the single spark of light they have thrown upon any one point of the science of war? They only illustrate its difficulties in their own persons, by showing, that men of ability may be present in twenty campaigns without comprehending the first principles of their profession. One of them, I believe it is Rogniat, seriously proposes that the bayonets of the rear-ranks should be lengthened in order to render them more effective in a charge. Should not a review in the *Champ de Mars* have given the writer a juster idea of such a charge? Other French writers have actually discussed the point, whether columns were intended to fight, or only to move; so that it seems they do not yet know the object of the very formation with which they all but conquered Continental Europe. It was well for the fame of such commanders that nobody asked what became of the brave men so lavishly furnished by a ruthless conscription, and that no inquiry was ever made as to the manner in which victories were achieved, provided they told in a bulletin. The miserable farrago of folly and falsehood, dictated by Napoleon at St. Helena, that failed even as a bookseller's speculation, is of course totally undeserving of attention. For a Frenchman, Jomini is, however, a pretty fair relater of events. I do not exactly look upon the Marquis de Chambery as a tactical writer; but I cannot speak of French military writers without offering my humble tribute of respect to the talents of the author of "*La Philosophie de la guerre*," as well as to the generous and humane sentiments of which his various writings give such eminent proofs.

The military writers of Germany, far superior to those of France, cannot be altogether quoted against me. Count

Bismark, in his Tactics of Cavalry, so ably translated by Major Beamish, says that cavalry, "if they are determined, can overthrow the best infantry;" but, having said thus much, he immediately edges away from his own assertion, as if afraid of having gone too far beyond the limits of received opinion. I am, in justice bound to add, that I do not know any of the Count's subsequent writings. Count Kanitz, a far greater authority, leans to the same view, though he gives no decided opinion on the subject. The older writers — Berenhorst, from whom I have so often quoted, Bulow, and our own countryman, Loyd, are all favourable to the power of the cavalry, though they nowhere, I believe, enter into any particular discussion of the point here at issue.

(3) "*Major Mitchell, however, rests too much on detached examples, where accident and surprise on one side, or unprecedented daring on the other, may have led to unexpected results.*"

One instance would have been sufficient; and I have quoted a long list of instances independent of "accident and surprise," that all show what cavalry can do when making a proper use of their power; and as to "unprecedented daring," we must be prepared for it; and it is our own fault if we do not ourselves act up to the example that has been set us.

(4) "*To make out his point, Major Mitchell must establish, that, upon equal terms, and in the open field, no infantry whatever can resist the shock of a cavalry charge delivered in compact order, and with the requisite energy and determination. But has he done so?*"

He thinks he has: look at the account of the actions of Garci-Hernandez, the Goerde, Totenhausen, Haynou, and

others mentioned in the second part of this Essay, where the best of Continental infantry were overthrown, with every advantage of preparation and formation on their side. I was, of course, speaking only of infantry such as they now are: infantry properly trained and armed, must at all times be able to resist cavalry.

(5) "*The Mamelukes were allowed to be the finest body of horse in the world, yet they failed in their attack on the French army, &c. &c.*

"*At Smolensko the Russian army retired in squares, followed by the French cavalry, which repeatedly dashed at them in the gallantest manner possible, yet were unable to make any impression on them, &c. Why has Major Mitchell neglected these and hundreds of similar examples that might be quoted? Both sets of cases must be carefully analysed and compared.*"

If I have succeeded in proving, from facts and principles, that cavalry possess the power of overthrowing modern infantry, however brave and well-disciplined, I am no longer called upon to assign grounds for the failure of the many cavalry attacks made against infantry squares during the war. In the second part of this Essay, I described the manner in which such unsuccessful attacks had generally been made, and the description was, if I recollect right, considered too graphic to be meddled with; it accounted pretty well for most of the failures in question. As to the instances mentioned by the reviewer, I am, however, enabled to give some account of them, and I shall do so accordingly. And first, of the defeat of the Mamelukes, as it has been quoted against me, both by French * and English critics.

* Spectateur Militaire, April, 1832.

It is true that the Mamelukes were the finest cavalry in the world; but they were so individually only. They were good swordsmen, admirable horsemen, well mounted, and superbly caparisoned; but they were destitute of discipline, and possessed no power of simultaneous action: their attacks on the French squares were made in small parties of tens, twenties, forties, and fifties, as chance, or the influence of individual leaders directed. Some advanced within pistol or carbine shot, discharged their fire-arms at the French, and retired again in order to load; others galloped up to the points of the bayonets, wheeled their horses round with that admirable dexterity for which they were famed, and in the very act of doing so, tried to cut down the men in the ranks; some actually backed their horses in upon the kneeling ranks; but few only dashed fairly at the foe, and of these few, it is a known fact, that some actually galloped in at one side of the squares and out at the other. From attacks conducted in a manner so totally devoid of all system, method, and simultaneous impulse, no favourable results could be expected, even though they lasted, as truly stated by the reviewer, from morning to night: but what must have happened had the mass come on like the whirlwind of the desert, and in compact order?

And now to the affair near Smolensko: it is easily disposed of. Segur, in the second chapter of his sixth book, says, "Newerowskoi, seeing himself thus exposed, united his columns, and formed them into a solid square, so compact, that, though several times penetrated by Murat's cavalry, the latter could neither traverse (*traverser*) nor disperse it." To comprehend this, we must either suppose that Newerowskoi's soldiers were different men, as to bulk and strength, from the other men of these degenerate days,

or that the French horses were like Cinderella's fairy steeds, little better than mice in disguise. Is not the whole a flourish of words, a mere French excuse for defeat?

"True it is," continues the Count, "that the first charges failed within twenty yards of the front of the Russians." Here M. le Comte is perfectly clear; and a little farther on he says, "Murat hurled the Wurtemburgers against them in order to force them to lay down their arms; but whilst the head of the Russian column was clearing the obstacle" (a fence) "the rear-ranks faced to the right-about, and stood firm. They fired, badly it is true, most of them in the air, and like men who were confused, but at so short a distance, that the smoke, fire, and noise of so many muskets frightened the Wurtemburg horses, and overthrew them 'pell-mell.'" Now, reader, is not this the old story over again? The men stop short of the enemy, notwithstanding the little effect produced by the fire of the infantry, and then throw the blame upon the horses, who cannot contradict them, though it has been shown, in the second part of this Essay, that the horses are not frightened, whatever may, at times, [illegible] be the case with the men.

To this list of cavalry failures, we may as well add an account of the action of Elbodon, as it is frequently appealed to in proof of the superiority of the infantry, and is related, rather triumphantly, by Colonel Napier, in support of this opinion. At page 240, of the fourth volume of the Peninsular War, is the following description of the combat.

"The 5th and 77th, two weak battalions, formed in one square, were quite exposed, and in an instant the whole of the French cavalry came thundering down upon them. But how vain, how profitless, to match the sword with the musket! To send the charging horseman against the

steadfast veteran! The multitudinous squadrons, rending the air with their shouts, and closing upon the gloving squares, like the falling edges of a burning crater, were as instantly rejected, scorched and scattered abroad: and the rolling peal of musketry had scarce ceased to echo in the hills, when bayonets glittered at the edge of the smoke, and with firm and even step, the British regiments came forth like the holy men from the Assyrian's furnace."

This is, no doubt, cleverly written, but truth commands the expulsion of a word, on which the entire passage hinges, both as to argument and construction. This unhappy word is "*closing*," for there was no closing, nor any thing like it, in the whole affair. Not a single Frenchman came within arm's length of the square, and no collected body of horsemen came within twenty yards of the bayonets, though the trifling effect produced by the fire of the musketry, astonished all the officers present. A friend of Colonel Napier very accurately described all these charges when speaking of another action of the same kind. "The cavalry," he said, "attempted to scare us away by noise and bravado, as boys scare a flock of crows from a corn-field; but failing to make us run, they fled themselves the moment our lads tipt them the sulphur." What closing indeed, can take place between a horse at speed and a man on foot that shall not overthrow the latter? If rooted in the ground he would be torn up, or his limbs would be fractured by the fury of the contact: so that whenever closing takes place, there is, and must be, an end to the infantry.

To examine, however, Napier's statement more closely. There were, according to his account, thirty squadrons of French cavalry in the field. They had, in the first instance,

to ascend a difficult position, defended by artillery, cavalry, and infantry combined. But when they reached the plain they were opposed by the two weak battalions of infantry only; for we purposely pass over the aid which they received from the advancing light-companies of the 3rd Division. The action lasted from eight o'clock in the morning till four in the afternoon; and the thirty squadrons of French cavalry, lost 150 men, killed and wounded, during this eight hours' combat! If we allow fifty men to have fallen by the fire of the artillery, and by the sabres of the cavalry,—no great result to have been effected by the fire of six guns, and the efforts of three squadrons, who, by Napier's account, fought well and bravely,—it leaves *one hundred men* put *hors-de-combat* by the fire of the infantry! That is, it required eight hours' exertion on the part of seven men to bring down one adversary. The horsemen who fled from enemies rendered so feeble, by their arming and training, should be held up to scorn and contempt. The action is a proof of their ignorance of duty, and nothing more.

An officer of distinguished gallantry and extensive experience, who has honoured these essays with some observations, states that during the war, from 1801 to 1815, the French cavalry never broke a single square of British infantry, and that the British only broke one square of French infantry during the same period; from which he would infer that all charges made by the cavalry against prepared and well-formed infantry are next to hopeless. A few words will be sufficient to show the little stress that can be laid on such general appeals, however formidable they may sound. In the first place, we have no right to take any particular period of a war, because we might confine ourselves to a time when no cavalry actions took

place. We must extend the inquiry to the whole length of time during which the men, the arms, and mode of fighting remained the same. And if we take the whole course of the war from 1793 down to 1815, we shall find that the British cavalry made eight regular charges against well-formed French infantry; five of these were completely successful; two failed, owing to circumstances that, as we shall see presently, prevent them from being taken into account; so that one alone remains to console the upholders of the delectable system of modern tactics.

If, on the other hand, we take the second period of the war only, we find that the British cavalry,—for I reckon the King's German Legion as British,—made five charges against regularly-formed French infantry; two of these attacks, at Hernandez and the Goerde, were completely successful; the charge of the 23rd dragoons at Talavera failed in consequence of the ravine that broke the onset, and rendered victory almost impossible. The surprise and faulty leading, clearly proved in Colonel Brotherton's letter, explains the cause of the defeat of the cavalry in their attack on a French detachment near the Coa. What occasioned the failure in the plain of Merida, I am unable to state: as already said, that single instance may help to wipe the tear from the eye of the theoretical tactician. But before gentlemen can turn even this to account, they must show that ground and circumstances were fair; that the cavalry knew their power and duty,—for men cannot be expected to achieve what they believe to be impracticable; and lastly, they must show that all the assailants, who escaped the fire of the French infantry, arrived at full speed, and with slackened rein, against the bayonets of the enemy. What arrested the further progress of the cavalry,

the tacticians will also have to tell us; for we do not know the power that could enable a few files of ordinary mortals to withstand the shock of a horse in full career. When contending against infantry, the cavalry have only their swords and the impulse of their horses to depend upon; these cannot, like muskets, tell at a distance; and whenever the cavalry do not close with their adversaries, in order to use these arms, it is either because they do not know, or dare not act up to their duty. It has been stated that the attack, of which we have just been speaking, was made in close column; if so, can we wonder at its having failed? Can anything be imagined more completely at variance with common judgment than a charge of cavalry in close column?

Since this article was prepared for the press, the king-making science has found another champion.

> "They come as fast as mountain deer,
> We'll drive them back as tame."

In the second part of the present Essay no mention was made of the noble charge executed by the heavy brigade at Salamanca, or by Ponsonby's brigade at Waterloo, because I wished to rest the case on isolated actions only, in which cavalry on one side and infantry on the other were fairly confronted on a clear stage. This was done in order that the results to which I appealed might not be ascribed to the aid of other troops, or so much mixed up with the confused events of a general battle, as to render the exact cause that brought them about dubious and uncertain. In the United Service Journal for November, 1832, there is, however, so clear an account of the charge made by General La Merchant's brigade at Salamanca, that I cannot refrain from quoting it, particularly so, as the

gallant author attempts, on the strength of the events related, to controvert some of the opinions set forth in these Essays. I had maintained that, on fair and open ground, as was the ground at Fuentes d'Onore, Elbodon, and Waterloo, good cavalry could easily, if they did their duty, overthrow the best of modern infantry; my new adversary goes farther, and shows that bold and resolute horsemen can vanquish good, ready, and prepared infantry, even on ground "obstructed by trees," and that too after being to a certain extent disordered by a three miles' gallop, and several successful charges. I thank the author for the valuable argument with which he has furnished me, and if it tells against his own view of the question, he will at least have the satisfaction of knowing that it tells in favour of true professional principles; nor is he, after all, the first pioneer who has been "blown up by his own petard."

Let us now examine this statement which, all controversy apart, is a clear one: we shall then see how it bears out the author's conclusions. After describing the first two successful charges of the brigade, the author who signs himself A. Z. goes on as follows:—

"*The nature of the ground, which was an open wood of evergreen oaks, and which grew more obstructed as they advanced, had caused the men of the three regiments of cavalry to become a good deal mixed in each other's ranks; and the front being at the same time constantly changing, as the right was brought forward, the whole had now crowded into a solid line, without any intervals. In this order, but without any confusion, they pressed rapidly forward upon another French brigade, which, taking advantage of the trees, had formed a* COLONNE SERREE, *and stood awaiting their charge. These*

men reserved their fire with much coolness till the cavalry came within twenty yards, when they poured it in upon the concentrated mass of men and horses with a deadly and a tremendous effect. The gallant General De Marchant, with Captain White of his staff, were killed. Colonel Elley was wounded; and it is thought that nearly one-third of the dragoons came to the ground; but as the remainder retained sufficient command of their horses to dash forward, they succeeded in breaking the French ranks, and dispersing them in utter confusion over the field."

Farther on A. Z. says—

"*If, under circumstances like these, the condensed fire of infantry be able to create such havock, what must be its comparative effect when delivered from a square in a state of perfect preparation, with every man animated by the consciousness of the formidable attitude of that imposing array of which he forms a part?*"

These extracts speak for themselves; they show that a body of tried infantry, who "availed themselves of the trees" that "obstructed the ground" on which they were formed,—and trees are valuable auxiliaries on such occasions,—who awaited the onset "steadily," and "gave their fire coolly;" who did, in fact, all that brave soldiers, so trained and armed, could do, were nevertheless incapable of resisting the charge of horsemen already disordered by their previous success. Has a stronger proof of the relative power of the two arms ever yet been brought forward?

But had the French been formed in squares, then would the glory of modern tactics have arisen in full splendour, and the cabalistical power of that marvellous figure would then, like the Medusa-headed shield of Minerva, have paralyzed, in mid career, the noble steeds and gallant hearts

who shrunk neither from the fire nor the bayonets of the French infantry! Now, is it not strange that we should allow ourselves to be imposed upon by mere sound in this manner; for what, after all, is a square but a body of men facing outwards in four different directions, in order that neither flank nor rear may be left exposed, and thus *fighting*, at the option of the assailant, only a quarter of of the entire number? What imaginable aid can the front attacked derive from the men who are facing altogether away from the assailants, against whom they cannot bring a single musket to bear? The French *colonne serrée*, of which we have been speaking, seems to have been attacked in front; it could, and would no doubt, have faced outwards had it been attacked in flank; but what benefit could the men attacked have derived from the pleasing conviction, that three-fourths of the entire body were uselessly facing away from the front attacked? A few muskets less would no doubt, by such a formation, have been fired at the dragoons, but by no possibility could a single additional one have been brought to bear against them. Is it not evident from the necessity of such explanations, that we are still at the A B C of the science?

In speaking of the last volley so "coolly and deliberately" fired by the French infantry; A. Z. says that it is "thought nearly one-third of the dragoons came to the ground." The loss of this brigade in the battle of Salamanca was 4 officers, 94 men, and 140 horses killed and wounded. Now, deduct from this number the men and horses put *hors de combat* in the two first charges mentioned by the author; all those also who were merely scratched by the bayonets in making their way through the confused mass of vanquished enemies, scratches that tell in

returns, though not in the field; recollect what tremendous wounds horses will bear without being impeded in their progress, and how often men are wounded in the heat of action without immediately perceiving their hurts; and, having deducted all these from the total loss sustained by the brigade, how many men and horses are likely to *have fallen* in galloping over the twenty yards they had to traverse after receiving the fire of the French infantry? For only the men and horses of the front rank, who actually fell in traversing this short space, could in anything impede the progress of a brigade. The total number killed in the battle, was 23 men and 68 horses, and many of the latter were, in fact, killed after the close of the action, owing to the severe wounds they had received. What, then, becomes of the "third of a brigade" that went down before a single volley of musketry? If we take the author's statement to the letter, it tells still more against him; for it shows that not even a loss so tremendous could arrest the intrepid men with whom he was acting.

In discussing points of military science, with a view to bring out just professional principles, we must keep fancy within bounds, adhere as closely as possible to the facts which are our only guides, and leave declamation and fine phrases to those who seek to hide truth beneath a display of words. It is only in the field, when the spirit of victory is high, when its flashes of inspiration dispel the clouds of doubt, as the flashes of lightning dispel the clouds of darkness, that we can, at times, give the rein to imagination, and, trusting to fortune and our swords, grasp at success, though placed beyond barriers from which mere science and combination would shrink back dismayed: in the closet we must always reason logically and calculate coolly.

To return, however, to our Caledonian reviewer.

(6) "*But, with all its disadvantages, it (the bayonet) is manifestly formidable in a steady hand accustomed to use it; and although there is great room for improvement, it cannot be denied that it has done good service.*"

Where did it do any service, except by acting on the imagination, and frightening away those who were willing enough to run? What mortal ever beheld a bayonet conflict: or who can imagine a conflict with an instrument so utterly ridiculous? An instrument with which you must actually thrust away to the north-west, if you would hit an enemy bearing due north. What chance would a bayoneteer have against an active adversary armed only with a sword, who should parry or seize the bayonet with his left hand, and use the right hand in the old Highland or Turkish fashion? When or where did modern infantry ever resist a bold onset of swordsmen? The defeats of the tacticians have been pretty numerous, as was shewn in the first part of this Essay, but their victories we have yet to learn. As to the "steady hands accustomed to use it," mentioned by the reviewers, no hands ever were accustomed to use it. The infantry soldier is only taught to come into action, but he is not instructed in the skilful use of arms, or taught to fight. Why it should be so, those may explain who uphold the system. Folard already tells us that no hand-to-hand combat took place during the war of the Spanish Succession; Berenhorst relates the same of the Seven Years' War; and it is now pretty generally admitted that no close contest took place during the last war; so that all such combats seem to have ceased from the very time this most formidable weapon was invented. That, at the storming of works, a soldier who could not get away in time may, here

and there, have been killed or wounded with a bayonet, is possible enough; it is also possible that, when Colonel Coulburn's brigade was galloped over at Albuera, some stubborn Englishman may have attempted to defend himself with his rickety, zig-zag bayonet. But a few isolated cases of this kind, if they did happen, cannot tell against the avowed fact, that no resisting men were ever forced back at bayonet's point; nor can soldiers be expected to close in mortal strife armed only with a weapon that, every man who has poised or wielded it, feels to be below contempt. Men will run *at* the enemy, or run after them if they give way; but if the assailed stand fast, the assailants invariably halt and begin to fire. The French always did so during the war; and those will read this who know that British soldiers have done the same.

The troops possessing in the highest degree the most essential military qualities, personal strength, courage, energy, and activity, must, of course, be the greatest losers by the change that has taken place from a close to a distant method of fighting; and it might have been expected that the British, who claim a superiority in these higher qualities, would have attempted to render them as available as possible. But this has not been the case; we have fallen into the system followed by very inferior nations: we wished, perhaps, to show our enemies that we could beat them even with their own arms, and deemed it, no doubt, illiberal to attack them with arms more formidable than those with which they could oppose us. Still there was always a good deal of rhodomontade about the wonders effected, or to be effected, with the bayonet. It was even stated in evidence, on General Whitelock's court-martial, that the second in command directed some of the soldiers

to take their flints out of the locks of their muskets, as everything was to be done with the "bayonet." One man was actually killed in obeying this strange order. When charges of cavalry are made in close column, and when generals make the infantry soldiers throw away their flints, we may well be allowed to question the value of a system that has fostered ideas leading to conduct so extraordinary.

(7) "*But in a question like that which we are considering, more attention should be paid to facts than to theories, however plausible and however ably supported.*"

Yes, to facts when duly analyzed and placed in a proper light, but not to mere results, unless we know the exact causes that brought them about, and these will as often be found in the very hearts and thoughts of the soldiers as in the circumstances of battle. In military inquiries we must never generalize, or allow ourselves to be imposed upon by sound, or by what is termed authority,—the broken crutch on which the lame of intellect invariably strive to support doctrines no longer defensible by logical demonstration. We must follow truth through the dark mazes of modern war, and bring her out from the hiding places in which professional pedantry, ignorance, and the efforts of little minds, when placed in high stations, endeavour to conceal her, fearing, perhaps, that the flashes of light reflected from the mirror, might not, like the flashes of lightning, always respect the laurel. Men of high character alone, who know that all sciences must be progressive, aid and encourage such inquiries, fully aware that every ray of light called forth under their auspices, will add to their fame, by showing the difficulties they had to contend with, and by clearing away some of that darkness under which even the best have erred. "Qui n'a pas fait de fautes á la guerre," says Tu-

renne, "ne la pas fait longtems." It is on the strength of facts and truths thus brought out that we must endeavour to build and carry into effect new theories, unless we intend to remain for ever stationary, with all our imperfections on our heads. Henry and Maurice of Orange were both theorists, Gustavus Adolphus was a theorist, and so was Frederic II. All these men, the real founders of the present science of war, rejected the faulty practices of their time, struck out new paths, looked deeply into the means and objects of the profession, and then established those theories that, when carried into effect, rendered their arms victorious and their names immortal.

Those only who are unacquainted with history, or incapable of observing the relative position of the arts and sciences towards each other, and towards society in general, can be blind to the fact, that civilization and the arts of peace have only advanced hand in hand, and on the same alignment with what, to superficial observers alone, may seem the destructive art of war; and total folly only could now dream of striking out such a science from the moderate mass of human knowledge, or of founding institutions on the presumption of its non-existence. What, let us ask, would be the result, were all the inhabitants of the earth to divest themselves at once, by universal accord, of every particle of military knowledge? Not, certainly, a total cessation of war, for war results from the evil passions of the human breast, and not from the military science which is intended to repress their baneful influence,—no, we should only be forced, on the first outbreaking of national anger, again to take up the science from its earliest and rudest beginning, thus forfeiting all the advantages gained by the torrents of blood that have been shed in raising it

even to its present moderate height. And any single state that shall attempt to discard the science of war will only be paving the way for its own destruction, as long as the great powers of Europe continue to cultivate military knowledge, and to honour military virtues. All must, from necessity, therefore, follow the same examples, were they even so unwise as to be desirous of adopting a different line of policy.

We may, no doubt, by giving the reins to imagination, picture to ourselves a state of human civilization so high and perfect as to render appeals to arms needless and impossible. But as far as the feeble powers of man enable him to look into futurity, such an order of things can yet be considered only as the brilliant dream of generous philanthropy; and till the vision is realised, it must be the duty of every government to encourage military virtues, as well as to cultivate the science of war, in order to secure permanent protection for the honour, property, and independence of the countries over which it is called upon to rule. And let it always be recollected, that property has never long remained where honour had been discarded, and that the virtual independence of nations has often ceased to exist, long before hostile banners, or the still more dangerous banners of protecting allies, had waved beneath the walls of their capitals.

In what state the science of tactics, the very foundation of the art of war, has, in the face of these truths, been allowed to remain in this country, was shown at length in the foregoing papers. Hundreds of thousands of infantry, the strength of armies, were sent to battle without having been taught the use of arms. These noble soldiers,—for so their gallantry, discipline, and high bearing on every oc-

casion well entitle them to be called,—possessed neither the means of resisting cavalry upon open ground, nor of contending, successfully, in hand-to-hand combat, against bold and energetic enemies; they were not, and are not, dexterous enough in the use of arms to encounter, on equal terms, adversaries skilful in distant and desultory warfare: and, as far as the development of moral and personal faculties go, the men are as ill prepared for fighting on the day of battle as they were when they left the loom or the plough to enlist in the army. The very weapons placed in the hands of the soldiers are made on principles at variance with good swordmanship, or skilful musket practice.

As a trifling addition to the proofs formerly brought forward to show the value of our system, I may here mention, that the late excellent Mr. Surtees, of the Rifle Brigade, expressly says in his Memoirs, that he does not believe a single shot, out of nearly two hundred which he fired, during the battle of Bergen, took effect; an ignorance in the use of arms, for which, he somewhere else remarks, the Americans very justly laugh at us. The following anecdote will help to illustrate the accuracy of the above statement.

On the morning after the first day's action of Fuentes d'Honor, a French officer, believed to be General Regnier, approached our line, and, dismissing a large suite by which he was attended, rode down to the banks of the Duos-Cases in order to reconnoitre that part of the position where the 5th division was stationed. When he came within a hundred, or a hundred and fifty yards of an advanced knoll on which the grenadiers of the Royals were posted, an officer, naming one of the soldiers, said, "You are a good shot, bring down the Frenchman." The soldier fired and

missed, and the entire company immediately began firing, though without any other effect than making the French officer's horse jump and caracole. The gallant rider only checked the animal's mettle, and continued his progress unmoved and untouched by the balls that were flying about him, and the English officers, struck by his noble bearing, made the soldiers cease firing.

That things have not much mended,—and how indeed should they?—may be seen by the following extract from a late Brighton paper: the statement is probably not much exaggerated. "On Saturday week, a certain brigade of fusileers, in the neighbourhood of this town, proceeded to exercise with *ball* cartridge. An immense quantity of ammunition was expended in the course of the day, at the close of which it was triumphantly announced, that one man (out of sixty) had hit the mark!"

If such is our practice in peace, what is it likely to be in war?

The French, whose arming and training is pretty nearly upon a par with our own, expended, by official returns, 3,000,000 of ball cartridges during the operations before Algiers. They estimated the number of Moors killed and wounded at 10,000; so that, without making any allowance for those who fell by the fire of artillery, it requires three hundred musket-shots to put one enemy *hors de combat.* But we now know that there were not even 5000 Moors killed and wounded; many of those who fell must, of course, have fallen by the fire of artillery; so that it must have taken some six or eight hundred musket shots to bring down a single enemy! Now, reader, what think you of the system that limits the exertions of bold, active, and energetic men to the use of such a weapon?

Perhaps you will appeal against this sweeping condemnation of the system of tactics to the victories achieved, during the war, over some of the bravest nations of the world?—But those nations followed, if anything, rather a feebler system than your own; and our success may be fairly ascribed to the general knowledge and high character of the officers, as well as to the stout hearts and strong arms of our men; so that, to render the appeal effectual, we must make it clear that our victories were always gained at the lowest possible expense of blood and treasure; and this will hardly be attempted in the face of the facts stated in the first part of this Essay, that amply prove loss and disaster to have resulted from the system, and from the system alone.

If these, our own disasters, have not yet been so overwhelming as others quoted in the first part of the Essay, to show how often a tenacious adherence to faulty and superannuated practices has occasioned the loss of empires, provinces, and entire armies, they have, nevertheless, been sufficiently marked to lay bare the causes from whence they resulted. And is not this enough? Must military improvement be constantly purchased by a boundless waste of human blood, instead of resulting from the power of human thought and reflection? Let us hope for the better things that are within our reach; for those who remember the war, and know the materials of which our army is composed, can well picture to themselves a band of British soldiers proudly advancing to battle, with the step of victory and glance of defiance; their bodies erect, heads high, and confident in themselves, their leaders, and their arms; already looking upon every inch of ground marched over, as so much conquered territory; and still counting, like

the army of Alexander at the Issus,* more than nine-tenths of the entire number effective in the ranks after years of triumphant progress.

But under the present system, we can look only for a repetition of what the same system produced before. When the war, already raging in the hearts of men, shall break out into open hostility, we must again expect to behold melancholy trains of exhausted stragglers in the rear of every line of march; crowded hospitals, a boundless waste of ammunition, and small results produced; sanguinary combats fought, and few advantages gained; protracted campaigns, and many more thousands destroyed by sickness and suffering than by the weapons of the foe. We shall again see armies raised, fleets assembled, seas traversed, and mountains crossed, in order that we may confront our enemies; not, indeed, to spring upon them as springs the lion in his wrath upon the foe, nor to dart upon them as the eagle in his pride darts down upon the prey; no, but just according to prescribed rule,—to pull a trigger at them!

The system is now, divested of false glitter and in its naked feebleness, brought fairly, I hope, to the bar of professional opinion; let the officers of the army, who take an interest in the service, compare what skilful and well-armed men have effected, and may therefore effect again, with all that a tactical soldier is enabled to perform by the aid of his present arming and training: having made this comparison, let them decide accordingly, on the value of modern tactics.

* Polybius, book xii.

ON TACTICS.

PART IV.

" Mon métier ;
Il n'est pas fort humain, mais il est nécessaire.
L'homme est né bien méchant ; Caïn tua son frère ;
Et nos frères les Huns, les Francs, les Visigoths,
Des bords du Tanaïs accourant à grands flots,
N'auraient point désolé les rives de la Seine,
Si nous avions mieux su la tactique Romaine.
Eh quoi ! vous vous plaignez qu'on cherche à vous défendre !
Seriez-vous bien content qu'un Goth vînt mettre en cendre
Vos arbres, vos moissons, vos granges, vos châteaux ?"

Voltaire.

HOW SHOULD INFANTRY BE TRAINED AND ARMED.

Towards the middle of the last century, all the nations of Europe successively adopted the system of tactics introduced into the Prussian army, and over which the early victories of Frederick II. had already shed so brilliant a lustre. The great difference in manners, character, habits, moral as well as physical qualities, existing between the natives of different countries, seems never to have struck the princes and generals who presided over the military destinies of mankind: it presented, at least, no obstacle to the forced assimilation of these discordant materials. The

new science thus became, to the characters of men, what the bed of Procrustes had once been to their limbs: it crushed the loftier qualities of the brave, in order to reduce the possessors to mere shooting-machines; and vainly strove, on the other hand, to elevate by excess of torture, the timid and feeble to the same exalted level of modern soldiership.

War is the least levelling of all human pursuits; for its constant tendency is to develope character, and to range men according to character; but modern tactics is a levelling science, that reduces its followers to the same standard —the standard of mediocrity. Thus the automaton Muscovite, the idle Spaniard, the restless and ambitious Frenchman, the active and energetic Englishman, and the puny and effeminate Italian, are all, in conformity with this enlightened view of the subject, drilled and armed exactly alike. The Duke of Choiseul's saying is verified at least in tactics: "Alexander the Great and Alexander the coppersmith—*c'est tout la même chose.*"

We have before seen what this boasted science, so widely spread and so little worth, actually teaches us. As far as manœuvre and formation go, it has attained a high degree of perfection in the British army. There are various opinions as to the best modes of executing different matters of detail; and the general system of drill is, in the infantry, faulty in the extreme,—the cavalry are much better off,—but notwithstanding these disadvantages, there are no troops in Europe that, in point of celerity, promptness, and precision of movement, can at all approach to the British. The science brings men cleverly into action; but once engaged, it leaves the contending parties to settle their quarrels as best they may; it neither prepares them for

battle, nor does it teach them to fight. It arms the soldier with a clumsy, unhandy musket, which, posted as he is in the ranks, he can never use to great advantage, and which he is besides never taught to use with skill; so that very few soldiers know how to load a musket properly, or to pull a trigger without entirely jerking the muzzle of the piece away from the right line of aim. Accurate marksmanship is therefore totally out of the question, as was amply shown in the first and third parts of this essay. Though last, not least, modern tactics teach us to fix bayonets and to charge the enemy. Of all the manœuvres performed, this is the most irresistible—at a review.

A volley fired, a quick advance, muskets at the long trail, the martial display ending with a grand charge, delight the heart of the martinet tactician, astonish the spectators, and make the very nursery-maids scream for joy. In the field its success has not always been so decisive: it has happened, that, contrary to established rule on such occasions, the enemy kept his ground; the consequence invariably was, that the assailants halted, as if by one accord, and recommenced firing. A fierce and rapid onset is always trying to the nerves of those who are stationary, and this, followed by a much closer and consequently much more destructive fire, generally settled the business in favour of the attacking party, who, as usual, ascribed victory to a successful charge; though the idea of engaging in hand-to-hand combat, armed only with clumsy muskets and rickety bayonets, never entered the head of a single soldier on either side. Nor will it ever enter the head of a soldier whose training has been confined to the Prussian system of tactics.

We constantly hear it asserted, that great discoveries and vast improvements have been made in the science of arms

by the many conquering leaders of our time; but the moment we look for proofs, we are involved in difficulties. Owing to the great efforts made by the contending parties during the wars that sprung out of the French Revolution, armies, far surpassing in numbers any that had ever before been assembled by civilized nations, took the field against each other. Enlarged armies naturally rendered enlarged fields of operation necessary; the empire of chance was augmented in proportion, without being anywhere checked by an observable increase of ability. In times of revolution, reckless, daring men often attain to the command of armies; the French Revolution saw this exemplified in countless instances. And as the leaders so promoted, had nothing to lose by defeat, and every thing to gain by victory, they readily ventured upon the most extravagant enterprises. In cruelty to the feeble, in oppression of the weak, and in scornful infringements of all neutral rights, these men far surpassed every thing before known in civilised times; they deviated as widely from the received rules, as from the received courtesies of war, but they nowhere enlarged the bounds of science. On the contrary, they blindly handed over the truncheon of command to the Goddess of Fortune, who, often as blindly, placed crowns of laurel and of empire on brows for which the sober Goddess of Wisdom would probably have decreed very different decorations.

Vast means were naturally put in motion by nations struggling for their very existence; the shock of mighty masses reverberated wide and far; and Europe was more than once strewed with the fragments of broken thrones and scattered armies. The world was astonished at the novelty and magnitude of such events. The many were terrified or delighted, as party views or feelings dictated;

rhymers thought themselves inspired, rhetoricians were "filled with fury;" grave historians were dazzled; and all —"for madness ruled the hour"—mistaking the effects produced by the force of arms and of numbers, for the effects of skill and combination, joined in loudly proclaiming that a new science had been discovered, and that actions had been performed, far surpassing, in genius and heroism, whatever fame had before related of the mighty deeds of demigods and kings.

How constantly men become the dupes of their own repeated assertions, need not be told; the fact is amply illustrated by every page of their history, and by none of those pages more distinctly than by those that treat of military affairs. A contrast between the present art of war, and the rhapsodies every day uttered on the subject, both in poetic prose and prosaic verse, brings to this effect "confirmation strong as proofs of holy writ." Looking on tactics as constituting the legs and arms of the whole science of war, and considering all military enterprises not founded on a just tactical basis, as only so many ventures in a great carnage-game of chance, I confess that I am unable to perceive any one of the mighty discoveries of which so loud a boast is made. We have, no doubt, polished up and improved some matters of detail; we have also devised fine French names for plain old practices; but we have made no new discoveries. The Continental armies contrived, by degrees, to apply the old system of tactics to a mode of fighting for which it was totally unsuited; so that every field of battle was strewed with the mangled corpses of thousands who, by their position in the ranks, had been totally unable to take any active share in the fray. This was, no doubt, an improvement on the system that reduced

soldiers to shooting machines; as it broke them down to the level of mere walking targets for the benefit of artillery practice; but as to any better light thrown upon the science, we look for it in vain.

It is due to the British army to say, that all the deviations made, in matters of detail, from the original Prussian system, have been improvements. They did not derive their origin from the Horse-Guards; but from the just views of the officers of the army at large, and were by degrees carried into effect, as they happened to find favour and support. Sir Henry Clinton, Sir John Moore, and Sir Kenneth Mackenzie were, I believe, the principal innovators. The deviations made by Continental armies, and by the French in particular, seemed on the other hand, calculated only to facilitate the sacrifice of human victims, so lavishly placed at the disposal of Generals and Commanders. The British army, called the "Army of Shopkeepers," transferred at least one good trading quality from the shop to the ranks; they brought with them into the field, as honourable a parsimony of human life as was consistent with the melancholy business of war, and with the deplorable system of tactics under which they fought. This noble tenderness for the lives of the soldiers, on the part of men who never gave their own safety an instant's thought, pervaded all ranks of commanders, from the heads of armies to the commanders of regiments, and was duly felt and appreciated by the privates, even when they were, at times, harshly enough treated in other respects.

The art of combining cavalry, artillery, and infantry together, so as to make their united efforts produce the greatest possible result, is strategy, and cannot be treated of here. We must confine ourselves to one subject

at a time, but we shall find opportunities to show, that even strategy has not outstripped her sister science: on the broken crutches of modern tactics, no very rapid progress could be made.

In the first three parts of this essay, an attempt was made to expose the deficiency of the present system of tactics, which may be briefly characterised as lavish of the blood of friends, and sparing of the blood of foes. In the present chapter, we must endeavour to point out the remedy, or, the principles rather, on which remedy should be founded. One of the writers who has honoured these papers with some notice, sums up, in a review of the article last published, the defects which he looks upon as having been established. I have a particular satisfaction in quoting the passage, not merely because it has been acknowledged by one of the ablest writers of the day, a gentleman, distinguished alike for great talents and great learning, and whose opinion cannot fail to carry weight along with it; but because the critical severity with which the same writer has visited another of these papers, shows, sufficiently, that no individual bias has influenced the decision.

In the "Caledonian Mercury" of the 16th December, it is said,—"At any rate he (the writer of these papers) has demonstrated a number of truths wholly new in military science. He has established, beyond all possibility of dispute—1st, That the infantry soldier is at present badly armed, and that he is not even instructed in the effective and certain use of the unhandy and unserviceable arms with which he is furnished; 2nd, That in neglecting the unit, in attention to the mass, and particularly from the mode of fighting, the introduction of which may be attri-

buted to this weapon, the development of the moral and physical qualities of the soldier has been in a great measure disregarded; 3rd, That close combat with such a weapon is next to impossible under the present system of tactics, and practically almost never takes place, although it is the mode of fighting in which troops, possessing in the highest degree the most essential military qualities, as personal strength, courage, energy, and activity, would have the most decided advantage; 4th, That troops, such as we have described, are the greatest losers by the change which has taken place from a close to a distant method of fighting; 5th, That troops, as at present trained, are incapable of withstanding an onset having close combat for its object; or, in other words, that the bayonet is incapable of resisting the sword when wielded by a skilful and determined assailant; 6th, That infantry are in some cases as ill provided and as ill trained for defensive resistance as for offensive attack, and that even in the square formation they may be broken by the shock of a cavalry charge made with requisite energy and determination. Such appear to us to be some of the leading propositions which Major Mitchell has successfully maintained; and though we are not yet prepared to go the full length of some of his doctrines, it is incumbent upon us to state our decided conviction, that he has completely exposed and laid bare the defects of the existing system, not only in the arming and discipline of the troops, but still more in the method by which they are usually led into action."

Before we proceed to discuss the remedies for the "defects thus laid bare," the reader must permit me to make a short digression, in order to show that the troops are fully

equal to the task that will be demanded of them ; that we have in fact, good *matériel* to work upon.

I write under the conviction that British soldiers possess military qualities of the highest order, and are capable of performing greater things than the soldiers of any other country. I know that in these liberal times the assertion will be disputed. There are plenty of officers in the army who will assure us that British soldiers like the good things of this world as well as their neighbours ; that they would be just as idle if they dared ; and that they have as much dislike to broken heads and mangled limbs as the troops of any other country.

Liberal and generous declarations of this nature, rising so far above national prejudices, are always received with vast applause, and very often pass for something better than mere sound. In the Peninsula a number of men acquired a reputation for great sagacity by the constant repetition of such speeches. There needs, in fact, no ghost to rise from the dead to tell us, that British soldiers like the good things of this world as well as other men ; pity it is so few good things fall to their share ; nor will it appear strange that they should like their ease, considering the incredible hardships they are so frequently called upon to undergo ; still less can it be wondered at, that men who have little but robust limbs to depend upon, should wish to preserve these limbs entire. All this is nothing more than "leather and prunella ;" the question simply is, have not British sailors and soldiers some buoyancy of feeling, some elasticity or energy of character—call it what you will—that enables them promptly and manfully to overcome all these very natural inclinations, more readily and more effectually than the soldiers of any other nation ? Will not

the call of duty, together with their wild sense of honour —the soldiers themselves would term it manliness,—lead them farther than it will lead, or ever did lead, other men? Does it not render them more collected in danger, than any other troops, and give them, in a greater degree, the power of obeying in almost every situation?

My answer, at least shall be in the affirmative; and in proof of my assertion, I appeal to the actions performed by British sailors and soldiers, and quoted in the first part of this essay. I say sailors and soldiers, because we are speaking of the native qualities of the men, and these are not influenced by the colour of their jackets. Those actions, to which more might be added, have never yet been equalled by the soldiers of any other country; and no system of tactics, can demand from its followers, higher qualities than were displayed by the men who fought and conquered on these memorable occasions.*

Supposing, then, the feebleness of the system and the goodness of the *matériel* fairly established; let us next endeavour to show what, in justice to the one, should be the remedy for the other.

Berenhorst, author of the "Considerations on the Art of War," † who had served in the early campaigns of

* It has been said by General Foix and other French writers, that the foreign and auxiliary troops in our ranks fought *à l'égal des Anglais*. This is true of the King's German Legion, for you can nowhere find braver men than the Germans, who formed, besides, part of our army and partook of its spirit and feeling; but it still leaves the buoyancy of character, energy, and activity displayed by our sailors undisputed national property. It was natural for Frenchmen to praise our auxiliaries; it was right also, on our part, to extol them during the war; but the less now said about some of them the better.

† Betrachtungen uber Kriegskunst.

Frederick II., and may therefore be supposed to have taken an unbiased view of musket and bayonet tactics, already expressed himself as follows, at the commencement of the French revolution.—"Lances are the only arms that can give the infantry any power of combined action, and enable them, at the same time, to withstand the cavalry. The difficulty is to unite the action of the pike and musket without attempting to join the weapons. The self-conceited martinet is as incapable of understanding this principle, or of solving the problem, as the mere common-place member of the honourable profession: the imagination of both, wants the spring that raises the mind to the level of new discoveries. But the time will come; and when the cavalry shall once attain a knowledge of their strength and duty, even novices will comprehend the necessity for this change. And unless the race of man is altogether condemned to eternal stupidity, the cavalry must soon see, that a presented musket, with a blunt and rickety bayonet affixed to it, can neither inflict much injury nor arrest their progress; and that, if they will only dash on, an ill-aimed shot is all they have to dread. The example of many battalions galloped over—Heaven grant they may not be German battalions—will again place the lance in the hands of the infantry, though better constructed as an arm, and more skilfully combined with the musket, than it was during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries."

In these few words of a master, we have at once, the foundation of a new system of tactics laid down, the defects of the old pointed out, and some of its fatal consequences, already prophesied. The battalions spoken of, have been galloped over, as was fully shown in the second part of this essay; the patriotic wish of the writer has been ful-

filled—they were not German battalions; and the time has surely arrived when even novices may be allowed to see the necessity of the change which he announces; unless, indeed, we are condemned to that eternal stupidity of which he speaks, but of which I say nothing.

The attempt to solve the problem consigned to us by Berenhorst, and to add the power of the lance to the power of the musket, without diminishing the strength of the infantry fire, or augmenting the number of the soldiers, foiled Folard, Marshal Saxe, and Bülow, certainly the greatest tacticians of modern times; and it would be presumptuous to go over the ground where they failed, were we not, in addition to the experience furnished by our late wars, aided also by the light which their writings have cast on the dark and difficult path.

After the general introduction of fire-arms, it became necessary, during the middle ages, to protect the numerous bands of musketeers, against the attacks of cavalry, to which they were defencelessly exposed in the open field, when encumbered with their heavy matchlocks, *fourquettes*, and all the paraphernalia then necessary for loading. To effect this, they were mixed with spearmen, who were provided with heavy defensive armour. Sometimes spearmen and musketeers were formed in alternate files, with sufficient intervals to admit of the latter going to the rear, after firing, in order to load again. Sometimes they stood in alternate divisions. At a later period, the musketeers were formed on the flanks of the spearmen; and in the Thirty Years' War, we not only find them formed on the flanks, but also in front and rear of square "plumps" of spearmen, having at times, even bastion-like looking bodies, formed at each angle of the square or oblong mass. All were in deep for-

mations, from ten to fourteen ranks, and so as to leave the spearmen useless and exposed spectators of the fire of the musketeers, and the latter fully at the mercy of the former, or dependent on their own good speed, as soon as the parties came to what was termed push of pike,—"a right stiff sort of business," as Cromwell calls it, when speaking of the battle of Worcester.

Gustavus Adolphus was the first who introduced some improvement in these unwieldy formations. He diminished the number of ranks from twelve to six; separated the spearmen from the musketeers; and formed comparatively small bodies of each, so as evidently to render them all more moveable. But how the Swedes went to work with their brigades, such as drawn and described to us by Lord Rea and other writers, is not easily made out. We cannot comprehend what musketeers could effect, who were posted behind spearmen: or what object there could be in almost surrounding entire divisions of musketeers with heavy-armed spearmen. The comparative movability of these brigades, the gallantry of the soldiers, and the high genius of their sovereign, sufficiently account for the success of the Swedish arms; but the object of the singular and complicated formation of which we have been speaking seems still to remain a sort of military enigma.

Before the end of the seventeenth century, the lance had entirely vanished from the ranks of European infantry. Field Marshal Münich took a supply along with him when he went to command the Russian army destined to act against the Turks; but it was only, as shown in the first part of this essay, behind the *chevdux de frise* that Russian tacticians could be induced to wait the sword-in-hand onsets of the unbelievers; the lances were never used.

Folard was the first who, in his Commentary on Polybius, pleaded hard for the re-introduction of the lance; but his columns, however ingeniously contrived, were ill-suited to meet the constantly augmenting power of artillery and small arms. Carnot's conscriptions, and Napoleon's butcheries, had not yet been dreamed of. Marshal Saxe had commanded armies drilled, in part, on the new system, and felt all its defects. He also looked to the lance for a remedy; but he fell into disgrace, as soon as he was no longer wanted, and had only a regiment of cavalry wherewith to amuse himself; so that he was forced to consign his reveries to paper, instead of carrying them into practice. His book, however, is of great value, and deserves to be attentively studied by all military men; not, indeed, for facts and narratives, for he relates little, but for just principles. His plan for combining the lance and musket will hardly find favour now; for he encumbers his spearmen with muskets, forms his men four deep, and protects the two front ranks by the lances of the rear ranks. A rapid advance and charge, the great object of the lance, seems, with so solid a formation, entirely out of the question; and though he regulates his march by music, he forgets, like many inferior tacticians, that the "majestic world" is not altogether a level parade-ground.

The ill-fated Bülow is the last whose exertion in the cause of tactics we have to record. He had served with the Prussian army in the first campaigns of the Revolutionary war; he saw at once the defects of the boasted science, and got his head filled with notions of the wonders to be effected by the French tirailleur system; which notions were probably fortified during his stay in America, where he resided some years, and where he could not fail

to hear of heroic deeds performed from behind a bush or a tree. His head was, however, too clear a one, not to see the weak points of this mode of fighting; but, wishing to retain what was good, he attempted to remedy its many weak points by the introduction of the lance. He was evidently near the mark at which we are now aiming; but failed, as Marshal Saxe had failed, by proposing to make his men carry both lances and rifles. He was the last tactical writer, whose mind was capable of rising above the level of mere received practices.

The victories gained by the natural gallantry and intelligence of the French soldiers, in spite of the system under which they were supposed to fight, gave military opinion a bias in favour of masses and solid formations; simply disgraceful to human understanding, at a time when hundreds of pieces of artillery frowned destruction over every field of battle. Nothing but the most profound ignorance of every principle of professional science, as well as the most callous indifference to the lives and sufferings of men, could, for a moment, have tolerated a system that tended to eradicate from the heart every feeling of humanity, and to stifle military genius in the bud. It was well calculated for ignorant, grasping, and ambitious leaders; it enabled such men, in the absence of military talents, to gain battles by quenching the fires of the enemy, with the blood of their own soldiers, and, we might almost say, to overwhelm the foe with the mangled bodies of the human victims, so lavishly placed at their disposal by ruthless ukases and conscriptions. Humanity mourns, and honour sickens, at the bare mention of the blood-steeped victors of these disgusting scenes of inglorious slaughter.

As an individual, I have no very great reason to speak

well of the late Duke of York, and have never joined the numerous band of his Royal Highness's panegyrists; but as I formerly held up to just praise, a wise and able professional opinion which he had delivered on a most important occasion, so I am now bound to declare, that it was, in a great measure, owing to his Royal Highness's firmness that the British army escaped this French mania, which overran the whole Continent, and found plenty of advocates even in our own ranks. Not to retrograde, was already a great deal under such circumstances.

At a time when swarms of skirmishers already cover the front of every line or position; when artillery is so powerful, and when grape and canister sweep the ground at hundreds of yards, all idea of deep and solid formations must be given up: we must substitute for the weight of masses, extended lines, celerity of motion, and the skilful use of efficient arms. The infantry must again be divided into spearmen and musketeers. I would rather use the word fusileers, that being the original term applied to light infantry; that is, to those who were first armed with the light fusee: for what crime the full weight of a bearskin cap has been inflicted upon them, I pretend not to know.

One half of each company, or battalion, should be armed with lances, the other half with muskets. Marshal Saxe has told us how such lances should be made. They should be fourteen feet in length, hollow in the middle, and covered with parchment strongly varnished. They weigh, by his account, only five pounds each. Ours might perhaps be a little heavier; as the steel part ought to be longer and broader than the one he recommends, for the sight of so formidable a weapon will never fail to make a salutary impression on the minds of reasonable adversaries.

To this should be added a good cut-and-thrust sword, together with an oval shield of moderate size, made of prepared leather, capable of resisting at least a musket-ball that has passed its point-blank range. Spearmen and fusileers should all wear light helmets, short, full-skirted, and single-breasted surtout coats. The privates to have the old English wings; non-commissioned officers, scales; and officers, epaulettes and aiguillettes, according to their rank.

The dress must be rich and elegant. A becoming dress tends to elevate men in their own estimation; and most of us like to appear to advantage in the eyes of the fair part of the creation, whose influence extends something farther than mere scientific tacticians may suppose: and a reflecting mirror, more true than a modern despatch, that should display to the eyes of beauty the actions of lovers and acquaintance, would, in a battle-field, be worth "ten thousand men."

The fusileers should be provided with a lighter and a better musket than the one now in use; and a proportion of the best shots ought to have rifles. In the absence of something more efficient, the bayonet may be retained; for, by the side of the lance, even a feeble weapon may be of use; but I confess I should prefer to arm the whole of the infantry with swords.

The first objection to this proposition will be, that we shall at once forfeit an exact half of our fire—that is, the half of the strength or destructive power of the infantry, who, by that power alone, actually constitute the principal strength of armies. We should certainly forfeit, by such an arrangement, half the noise and smoke produced by the fire of the infantry; but we should certainly manage very ill, if we could not, by instruction, training, and position, far more than double the effect of the present practice.

Strategists will not, of course, allow us to double our ranks; they will at once declare our system a failure, unless we cover, with the same number of men, the extent of ground or position covered by the soldiers of the present school; and we must not fall into the error of the seventeenth century, and leave our spearmen exposed without any power of reaction, to the fire of musketry, on the same alignment with the fusileers, when the latter only are engaged. We must therefore keep the heavy-armed, as we shall call them, in reserve, in a manner to be shown presently, and extend, to open distance, the files of the light-armed. This formation will at once give the men elbow-room; and I confess I think it almost atones, in itself, for the diminution of the quantity of fire.

What precision of aim or direction can be expected from soldiers when firing in line? One man is priming; another coming to the present; a third taking, what is called, aim; a fourth ramming down his cartridge. After the few first shots, the whole body are closely enveloped in smoke, and the enemy is totally invisible; some of the soldiers step out a pace or two, in order to get a better shot; others kneel down; and some have no objection to retire a step or so. The doomed begin to fall, dreadfully mutilated perhaps, and even bold men shrink from the sight; others are wounded, and assisted to the rear by their comrades; so that the whole soon becomes a line of utter confusion, in which the mass only think of getting their shot fired, they hardly care how or in what direction.

True it is that, owing to the crowding in on some points, and casualties on others, elbow-room is sometimes got fast enough; but by that time the blood is already rushing with lightning speed and fire through the veins,

excitement is at its height; all composure is out of the question; and your well-drilled battalion, is fit for little more than a dash to the front, or a flight to the rear; and totally unfit to withstand the least shock or onset made with efficient arms,—unable also to make any very skilful use of the musket, which, to be rendered effective, must be used with a certain degree of coolness and composure.

Now, all this is entirely lost sight of by modern tacticians; they dream of nothing but mechanical precision; and totally forget that the automaton machines, whom they think of moving by mere rule and square, have each and all lives, souls, and feelings implanted in them by the hand of their Maker, and not exactly to be eradicated at the simple command of adjutants, adjutant-generals, or drill-serjeants. This is no doubt a great evil; but as we cannot change the works of providence, we must just try to adapt our poor and puny science to its omnipotent decrees; and, instead of attempting to extinguish, in living men, all human character and feeling,—call it feebleness if you like,—we must seek to regulate our system according to that character. Psychology and a knowledge of the effect of arms, now totally left out of sight, thus become the basis of a just system of tactics; precision of movement must follow as a matter of course, for it is indispensable; but it forms only the frame-work of the structure: the stone and cement are still wanting.

Many of the evils of line firing, above described, will be obviated by an extension of room alone. There will be less smoke; men will see better; they will not be incommoded by their neighbours; fewer will fall where fewer are exposed, and where there are intervals for the hostile shot to pass through; and all will be more under the con-

trol of their officers. Besides, we want no long-continued fire of musketry: the object of our fire is principally to cover the advance of the spearmen, or to keep an advancing enemy in play, till he comes within charging distance.

With the formidable arms of which we have been speaking, we must constantly strive to bring the adversary to close, prompt, and decisive hand-to-hand combat. No option must be left him, but to fight or fly; and if he choose the latter alternative, as discreet and scientific men naturally will, he must be followed up; there must be no "living to fight another day;" the victors must not be called upon to beat the same men half a dozen times over. But the enemy, we shall be told, will fall back on their reserves, their cavalry will take them up. Did the Roman reserves—and the *triarii* were something like reserves—prevent entire Roman armies from being stretched on the fields of Trebia and Thrasimene? Or do we never see cavalry and reserves employed against modern soldiers? It is not contended that lancers will effect impossibilities; all we contend for is, that they will effect a vast deal more than ever was, or ever will be effected, by the ill-dressed, ill-armed, and ill-trained infantry of the present day. If our hearts are as stout, and our arms as strong, as were the hearts and the arms of our ancestors, the lance and the musket should tell as well, as the bills and the bows of merry England once told on the fields of Cresсy and Agincourt.

To the arms of the Greeks, which we have given the spearmen, must be added something like the formation of the Romans. They should be drawn up in manipular order, that is, in small divisions having intervals equal to their front between each other; thus leaving openings for

the fusileers to file through when driven in, and to fill up when joining the general onset.

As I am here contending for a general principle only, it would be premature and useless to enter into a detailed explanation of the formations and movements that will be rendered necessary, in order to regulate the action of a battalion of lancers and fusileers. Should the principle find favour the details can easily be added. It may be a question, whether the fusileers should form separate wings, ranks, companies, or subdivisions. I incline for the latter; and think they should form the right subdivisions of right companies, and the left subdivisions of left companies, so as to leave each manipulus of spearmen equal to a company, and every individual company composed, half of spearmen and half of fusileers, in order that the two arms may always go together. In line, the spearmen should be formed three deep, but occupying, like the soldiers of the phalanx, thirty-three instead of twenty-two inches. We thus lose no diminution of front by our increased depth and additional elbow-room.

Let us not be told that troops cannot preserve their alignment, when rapidly advancing, with intervals between the files and companies. The Romans had double the intervals here mentioned, and advanced extremely well; and we must just learn to do the same; it is, in fact, easier to advance with, than without intervals, only we are accustomed to think otherwise: no objection was ever taken to the intervals between the squadrons of cavalry.

According to our general principle, spearmen form, like the heavy-armed of old, the main strength of the army; fusileers are only thrown forward to cover their advance, or to keep, as before stated, an advancing enemy in play

till he comes within charging distance. It is on lance's point that we must receive the shock of battle, and with levelled lances that we must bear down resisting foes. Plenty of cases will, no doubt, present themselves when the musket alone can be used; and then additional skill must make up for reduced numbers. On the other hand, what enemy will attempt to storm a breach or entrenchment, or attack an elevated position defended with the arms which we are recommending?

Celerity of motion must also add to our strength. A quick advance makes the blood circulate freely through the veins, and gives elasticity to the feelings. Even in an ordinary walk, a man moving rapidly forward shall boldly clear a fence or ditch before which he would, at other times, have paused under the apprehension of a fall or scratch. And if we move quickly, as we must learn to do, what is the great loss to be apprehended from the fire of musketry, which is nearly powerless at three hundred yards: a distance active men can easily traverse in a minute or two? As shown in the first part of this essay, modern soldiers require to fire, *at least*, a hundred shots before an enemy is put *hors de combat*. What, then, have we to dread from such men, if we only give them time to fire four or five shots each, and that too in all the confusion before described?

It is no doubt true, that a musket properly loaded, and fired at a right elevation, will kill at a much greater distance than three hundred yards; indeed the distance at which wounds are sometimes inflicted is altogether astonishing; the difficulty always is to hit. Besides, soldiers seldom load their muskets properly even at target practice; so that we do not risk much, when we say, that beyond

three hundred yards, the fire of musketry is little better than a mere waste of gunpowder. Tacticians talk, no doubt, about firing four and five shots in a minute. Miserable puerilities, not worth discussing. With ball cartridges three shots may perhaps be *fired*, but the more there is of such fire, the less will be the effect produced.

But if this, or any other new system, should turn out an improvement, foreign nations, we may be told, will immediately follow our example, and thus counteract all our anticipated advantages. The lance of Achilles might not, perhaps, suit every arm; but if foreigners should follow our example, are we and they no longer the same men? And is it not in close combat that the qualities of men tell to the most advantage? It was the Prussian system of tactics that, more than anything else, tended, as much as can be done, to make courage subservient to numbers. Thousands of shots may, at the same instant, be fired from far and near, at a single company or subdivision; but you can bring comparatively, few swords or lances to bear at once against a similar body. The Greeks and Romans contended successfully against countless odds; and it was individual energy, and skill in the use of efficient arms, that rendered our ancestors the most formidable warriors of the middle ages. The British army encountered, during the war, the best troops of Continental Europe,—those, at least, who all but conquered Europe; and, it is known to every officer who served, that the French infantry were always ready *pour faire le coup de fusil*, as they termed it, for hours and days together; but who ever saw them await a bayonet onset? Once or twice they stayed longer than the assailants, who had commenced their charge at a ridiculous distance, calculated upon; but assuredly no

mortal man ever beheld two lines or masses of modern infantry come within anything like arm's length of each other: and are those who would not encounter bayonets to encounter lances? It would be like rushing boldly into Charybdis after shrinking from the inundation caused by a pail of water.

Of the cavalry it will be needless to speak. The gentlemen who were ready enough to edge away from bayonets will require no great persuasion to keep at a distance from the really formidable lance. But on level ground horsemen must quail before no other arm,—whatever else appears comes but to certain destruction. In the British cavalry we shall never, I hope, hear the opinion again expressed that squares of modern infantry can, for a moment, arrest the progress of determined horsemen. That delusion, at least, is dispelled. The weapon that tends, more than any other, to render the infantry independent of the cavalry is also of the greatest advantage to the British, because, from our insular situation, our armies are often obliged to take the field weak in cavalry:—a circumstance that has more than once proved injurious to the progress of operations. The strength of the French cavalry, and the total want of cavalry on the part of the British, was one of the reasons assigned for the non-advance of the army after the battle of Vimiera; and what would the French cavalry have effected against Colonel Coulburn's brigade at Albuera, if half the men had been armed with lances?

In order to guide the movements of the fusileers, each company might, perhaps, have a small flag or standard, like what the Turks formerly used, and which the Prince de Ligne describes their skirmishers as advancing, so bravely, in the front of battle. These flags should be of

different colours, in order to serve as rallying-points for the different companies. The regimental colours, might, surely, be dispensed with,—the King's colours, being sufficient for one battalion. Wherever the cavalry is not to be dreaded, as in storming works, or where the nature of the ground prevents them from acting, the attack must be made sword in hand, with "shield poised high," in the old Highland style; and, provided the enemy is but fairly accessible, the result of such attacks need not be doubted.

But artillery! that "mows thousands down and makes whole hosts retire,"—surely these new-fangled lancers will never venture within the range of round and grape? Reader, if ever you had the melancholy fortune to behold a field of battle, you will know, from many a sight of horror, how little six and nine pounders,—those favourite engines of the destroying angel of wrath and war,—spare even the well-drilled followers of Sallern and Dundas. Lancers can claim no exception from the usual rule of mortality; but as it is the inefficiency of modern infantry, the slowness, in fact, with which they perform the work of destruction, which gives the artillery time to cause such havoc in the ranks; any mode of fighting that brings the issue to the prompt arbitrement of hand-to-hand combat, at once deprives that arm of half its power.

If peace is the object of war, as it certainly is the only legitimate object for which war can be carried on; the system of fighting that tends most speedily to bring about the desired result, is certainly the best and most humane. At Cannæ, 45,000 Carthaginians stretched upwards of 60,000 Romans on the field of battle in little more than three hours' time. And the 20,000 bold, robust, and skilful yeomen of England, who, out of the 30,000 present,

alone fought at Crecy, required hardly that space of time to strike down 40,000 of their adversaries. If anything approaching to such results had taken place at Fuentes d'Onor or at Salamanca, would another battle have been fought in Spain? But we manage things differently in these times. According to the present system, whole days of fighting are often required to carry a mere position, or to maintain a battle field. Entire campaigns elapse before an army is destroyed; and even then, more men are killed by want, toil, sickness, and the thousand evils attendant on protracted military operations, than by the weapons of the foe. Thousands fall by the sword, but tens of thousands perish, ingloriously, by pestilence and disease. Entire provinces are laid waste,—morality, and all the decencies of private life, are destroyed by the constant passage or stay, under all sorts of circumstances, of bands of daring men, reckless from the knowledge that their lives are every day liable to be offered up, in blind sacrifice, to the Moloch deity of war;—a deity that demands, from the mental cowardice of the age, and from the inefficient method of fighting which results from it, a sacrifice of the souls, as well as bodies of its victims.

Modern war drags its slow length, over smoking ruins and mangled corpses; revels in blood, and basks in the glare of flaming towns, temples and dwellings; while the wrongs of nations are left unavenged. Scenes of carnage, constantly renewed, obliterate, altogether, the original cause of strife;—till, in the end, a change of rulers, ministers,—or mistress, perhaps, occasions a change of views; diplomatists intrigue, or the finances become exhausted; and a peace is concluded, completely at variance with all the interests for which the contest had been maintained:—leaving virtue,

patriotism and kindred affection, to weep over the graves of thousands, idly sacrificed in long and ruinous contests.

Let us proceed, however, with our plan for giving, at least, more efficiency to the armed force itself. A strong army always tends to communicate some additional vigour, even to the foreign department of a government.

The soldiers intended to act, under the system of tactics here recommended, must be trained to athletic and gymnastic exercises, on the plan practised, some years ago, in the public schools of Germany, instead of being constantly kept at our present miserable and mechanical drill. They must be taught to fence, run, leap, climb, to throw the dart, and use the sword. Archery, as tending to strengthen the arm, open the chest, and accustom the eye to measure distances, and to take aim, must be constantly practised. Men should be made to take a pride in strength, skill, and activity: all must, of course, be rendered expert in the use of arms. The lance-exercise is simple: nor is it difficult to make men of ordinary sight and nerve good marksmen, provided you give them moderately good arms, and instruct them how to use those arms. But the present musket is too clumsy, the lock is stiff and heavy, and the sight is better calculated to prevent men from taking aim than to help them. A double sight near the breech, if only to guide the eye into the right line of aim, a matter of which drill-serjeants can know nothing, is, in fact, indispensable. The butts and stocks of muskets are all shaped alike, though no two men are formed alike about the neck and shoulders. In nine cases out of ten, the difficulty of pulling the trigger makes the soldier open the whole of the right-hand in order to aid the action of the fore-finger; this gives full scope to the recoil: the prospect of the blow makes him throw back

his head and body at the very moment of giving fire; and, as no aim is ever required, he shuts his eyes, from the flash of the pan, at the same instant, so that the very direction of the shot becomes a matter of mere accident. The present method of instruction, together with the manner in which the soldiers are posted in the ranks, cannot fail to make them bad shots; and Mr. Osbaldiston himself would be no better than his neighbours after three months' good drill.

I should speak contrary to my conviction and knowledge, were I to throw the blame of this inefficient style of drill on the regimental officers of the army. There are, in every regiment, plenty of officers of the highest talents, perfectly acquainted with the just theory of drill, but they cannot deviate from the beaten track, nor should they attempt to do so. All real improvement must come to the army with the full sanction of head-quarters; for, if commanding officers were to change, and even improve, at pleasure, we should soon have no system at all. The little attention bestowed upon these apparently trifling details, is much to be regretted, because, trifling as they are, they lead to great consequences,—and also because Englishmen have naturally a great liking for martial exercises and a singular aptitude in acquiring skill in the use of arms, from which the best results might be expected.

To speak of anything like rewards to officers or soldiers in these times is, of course, something more than ridiculous; but I may be allowed to express, at least, a wish on the subject. I would therefore, say, that rewards should, on all occasions of target practice, be given to the best shots; and that any soldier who, at a hundred yards, twice missed a target of the size of a man, should be held up to the

derision of his comrades. What is of far more consequence, good conduct should ultimately insure for the soldier some permanent reward. Years of honourable toil, hardship, and danger, should lead to something better than an old age of poverty and privation. Honourable notice and distinction should attend honourable and soldierlike bearing. A veteran, on returning to his home, should be the pride of friends and kindred, instead of being a burden to the good, and an object of scorn to the low and worthless. The mean souls who grudge to the soldier even his present scanty pay, because it is more than some labourers earn, should recollect, that he is absolutely stationary in worldly position during all the better years of his life. The labourer is his own master—he can rove about and try his fortune wherever he likes—he may at least hope for improvement; and such men often get forward in life. But hope, that comes to all, comes not to the soldier! In these liberal times, no path to preferment is open to him during his tedious period of service; and when he is discharged at last, and told to seek his fortune, it is at a time of life when fortune no longer smiles upon us. This is saying nothing of the careless habits that soldiers naturally fall into,—they remain children even to the very last.

Now, all this should be altered, if on the score of economy alone, in order to raise the few, so as to render them capable of performiug the duties of the many. Men, to exert themselves, must have something to which they can look forward. Commissions, and promotion to rank in the service, hold out little prospect,—there are not sufficient openings. Besides, a man may be a meritorious and most deserving soldier, and be yet totally unfit for an officer; and to speak truth, it is not the path for which their pre-

vious habits and modes of thinking best suit English soldiers. The fair prospect of being employed in respectable, though subordinate, situations, after years of honourable service, would naturally make men more careful in their general conduct, and would eminently tend to elevate the character and *morale* of the army. No one who is not well acquainted with the soldiers themselves, not even officers, unless where they are liked, and confided in by the privates, can possibly form an estimate of the number of intelligent and deserving men to be met with in the ranks of every regiment.

The British army has now attained the highest degree of perfection consistent with modern tactics; but it still contains within itself, unappropriated elements of strength and power which must be called forth, unless we again intend to send armies to battle, with all their best energies shackled. The courage and hardihood of the soldiers, have been found equal to any task that can be demanded of them. They have surpassed the troops of other nations as much in actions of toil and exertion as in actions of courage: for some of the marches they performed during the war—such as the march of the light division to Talavera—far exceed the most celebrated marches performed by Continental armies during the same period. In all ranks, the majority of officers are distinguished for zeal, talent, and gallantry: the high feeling of honour which has become characteristic of the members of the United Service, admits of their being depended upon in every extremity. In practical knowledge and efficiency, the scientific departments of the army equal, if they do not surpass, the same departments of other armies; so that the time really seems to have arrived for making some pro-

fessional advance that shall give us the full benefit of the advantages we really possess. But the present system tends, in all its branches, only to crush the energies and cramp the actions of men.

Let me not, however, appear unjust to the military authorities, past or present. Whatever opinions may have been entertained at the Horse-Guards, the individuals at the head of the army could never, in our time, be looked upon as altogether free agents, and able to act up to their own views. In this country the army has, for many years, been the object against which numerous, and influential parties in the state, have constantly directed their most inveterate attacks. Some, for the plain and simple reason, that a loyal and well-disciplined army, stood in the way of plunder and spoliation: others, because such an army gave strength and efficiency to the government of the day, which the ambitious were, at any public sacrifice, anxious to pull down and supplant. While a third party, setting up as guardians of the public purse, strove to acquire a vulgar popularity, by using every effort to diminish the comforts of the soldier, and to reduce the numbers and efficiency of the army, on the plea of public economy, at a time when every reduction was actual oppression to the poor, because it naturally added to the mass of poverty; and when an efficient military force was also more necessary for the maintenance of foreign and domestic tranquillity, than it ever had been at any known period of human history. The efforts of these parties, though arising from very different motives, fell with concentrated force on the army, and constantly tended to crush energy, and to arrest improvement. All ranks strove carefully to confine themselves to the narrow sphere of their own little duties and

responsibilities. The burden of thought was always hurried, as fast as possible, from shoulder to shoulder, until it reached the higher authorities, who were verily not upon beds of roses; and who were as anxious to narrow the sphere of responsibility as their subordinates. If this feeling was natural even in regard to arrangements of minor importance, can we wonder that men should dread the responsibility which a complete deviation from all the established modes of fighting would entail upon them? Failure, from any cause, would have been ascribed to their innovations; and the destruction of armies, the loss of provinces, and the humiliation of empires might have attended mistaken or erroneous views. It is easy to theorise on paper as we are doing here, but who that is acquainted with history, or has ever seen a battle-field, would not pause before venturing upon changes that the most perfect conviction pronounced to be just and necessary?

A single look at the materials with which we have to act is almost enough to make us resign, in despair, all hopes of forming a system of tactics that shall place us fairly above the caprices of fortune. We have to combine, on one side, and to oppose on the other, the whirlwind speed and strength of cavalry; the tower-shaking and far-destroying force of artillery; the slow, feeble, and vulnerable frame of man. We think we have moulded into one firm consistent shape, all these discordant materials: our lines are formed, our battle is arrayed, already we grasp at victory that seems within our reach—the thunderbolts of war strike in, and the first lightning flashes show us breakers on every side, that had never been "dreamt of in our philosophy." From theory to practice each step of the science

of arms is thickly beset with dangers; but unless we wish to tempt fortune by our willing blindness, and to add to the list of armies and nations destroyed by a criminal inattention to tactics—unless we are desirous of again sending hundreds of thousands of infantry, the strength of armies, to battle without ever teaching them the use of arms—thus forcing soldiers to purchase, with torrents of blood, the success which, by the skilful use of efficient weapons, might have been achieved at comparatively little loss—it is our duty, fairly and manfully, to face those dangers in the closet, as well as in the field.

ON THE MERIT AND ACTIONS OF THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH CAVALRY.

"Il est certain que l'on ne connait pas la force de la cavalerie, ni les avantages qu'on en peut retirer."—*Marshal Saxe.*

A passage, in Colonel Napier's History of the Peninsular War, assigns to the French cavalry a higher station in military estimation than to the British. When the volume, containing this dubious assertion, first appeared, the subject naturally led to a good deal of controversy. Not only was the question an interesting one in a military point of view, but it affected a numerous and influential branch of the service; and the cavalry officers, to their credit be it said, took up the cause right warmly; while the great historian defended, with his usual ability, the new position he had assumed. We shall not pretend to decide between such champions; but content ourselves, in touching on this important, and somewhat delicate, point, to follow a line of enquiry, left fully open by the belligerent parties.

If, without a close investigation, we were to judge, as most men do, from general results only, we should perhaps,

give the preference to the French cavalry; for they not only aided, on many occasions, to achieve the victories gained by Napoleon's armies, but they still more frequently contributed to bring about the great results that sprung from those triumphs.

At Marengo, a single charge of cavalry, led by General Kellerman, turned the fate of the day: it rendered the defeated French victorious, and placed the Imperial crown on the brows of Napoleon; who, if unsuccessful, would probably have been tried by a revolutionary tribunal, as a deserter from the army of Egypt.* In the campaign of 1805, the French cavalry acted a very conspicuous part; they not only struck the first blow, and contributed mainly to the overthrow of General Mack's scattered corps, but they followed up their success so boldly, as to render it impossible for the vanquished Austrians again to rally. The same was the case in the campaign of 1806. Murat and the cavalry decided the battle of Jena in favour of Napoleon; and at Prenzlau they forced the remnants of the Prussian army to capitulate and lay down their arms. Though not successful against the Austrian infantry at

* The inclination to bring Napoleon to trial, for abandoning his army in Egypt, was not wanting: it was only the power that was wanting: that he deserved to be tried is, of course, sufficiently evident. On what trifling events the affairs of nations and of empires sometimes hinge, may also be discovered from the result of this one action. Kellerman, by a bold charge with only 500 cavalry, changed the fate, not only of a battle, but of Europe, because his success placed Napoleon, the harbinger of fifteen years of war and desolation, on the throne of France. What would have been the consequence, if Kellerman, instead of meeting some Austrian martinet, at the head of the cavalry of the right wing, had there encountered a Seydlitz, a Blücher, or a Bernhard of Weymar? The crown gained under such circumstances by Napoleon, might not, perhaps, have been an enviable one.

Aspern, they obtained brilliant advantages, during the early part of the campaign of 1809, in the actions fought near Ratisbon. In 1812, they led the march to Moscow, and carried the principal, and central position, at the battle of the Borodino: and during the operations round Dresden, they long supported the fortunes of their falling chief. In Spain, also, their gallantry was conspicuous, and, independently of a number of minor actions, they defeated the whole of the Spanish army, at the battle of Rio Secco.

The British cavalry can boast of no results of this kind. The charges made by General Le Marchand's brigade at Salamanca; by Ponsonby's and Vivian's brigades at Waterloo, were brilliant in the highest degree, they were first-rate military actions; but they only aided,—greatly indeed,—in gaining first-rate victories; they did not sweep whole armies from the field; nor did they, in so direct and perceptible a manner, cause the overthrow of thrones and empires. In fair fight, on the other hand, cavalry against cavalry, and with anything like a parity of numbers, the British always had the advantage over the French; and every thing considered, it could hardly be otherwise.

The French are not an equestrian people. The idea of Frenchmen following the hounds is not altogether comprehensible, and though many of the gentlemen of the *ancien regime* were good *manège* riders, the art seems to have gone out at the Revolution, and the Imperial cavalry were invariably bad horsemen. They were also indifferently mounted; and, strange to say, the cavalry of Napoleon, the great military luminary of the age, as people will call him, were not even taught the sword exercise. So ignorant, indeed, were the French officers of the real action of cavalry, that it was no unusual thing for them to receive

a charge at the halt, *de pied ferme*, with pistol in hand, carbine presented, or sword pointed, thus depriving themselves, for the chance of what they could effect by a few paltry shots, or single *coup de pointe*, of all the advantages naturally resulting from the strength and impulse of their horses. But the boundless and irresponsible command of numbers, made the French officers bold and enterprising, and these qualities, backed by men as eager for fame and spoil as their leaders, amply account for all the success and reputation required by the French cavalry.

We may here quote another specimen of French notions of cavalry warfare. General Von Pappenheim, a cavalry officer of reputation, now in the Bavarian army, and who appears to have served under Napoleon, tells us that the French cuirassiers, the pride of the French cavalry, only charged at a trot, being from their unweildy weight, unable to spur their horses on to greater speed. "I was a witness," he says, "of the dreadful price which the French had to pay for their slow advance at Aspern. They attacked in column—and at a trot, being incapable of any quicker movement: the rearmost men driving on the foremost, who were thus forced to advance indeed:—but at what a loss. Only Napoleon, with his genius and vast resources, could afford to purchase victories at such a price."* The word "genius" might here, perhaps, have been omitted, considering how little genius such a system of tactics displays. The same laudable method was afterwards pursued at Waterloo, and with just as little success; though the praise bestowed on the genius and conduct of the vanquished, surpassed, in folly and extravagance, all encomiums ever bestowed on victorious talent. The bravery of these

* Militairische Fantasieen: Part 6. Augsburg, 1832.

cuirassiers, — and, *brave comme un cuirassier*, became a saying in the French army,—is allowed to have deserved great praise: but what sort of cavalry did they constitute? Victorious cavalry we shall be told. Granted: but when victorious they were so in consequence of numbers, the bravery of the men, or the weakness of the enemy. They could owe little to their skill as cavalry soldiers, and to their knowledge of cavalry warfare. The mere weight of a steel-clad mass would, at times, no doubt, bear down a feeble, inferior, or equally unskilful enemy. Such masses might be looked upon as new war-engines, constructed of human *materiel*, and worthy of having been devised by the generals and leaders of the French Imperial and Republican armies;—but they were bad cavalry when compared to bold, skilful, and well commanded horsemen, acquainted with the real strength and force of cavalry action. A great part of the cavalry overthrown at Waterloo by the 10th and 18th Hussars, were composed of cuirassiers: the same was the case with those defeated by the heavy brigade under Lord Edward Somerset. And, on the retreat from Villa-Franca, in Catalonia, the Brunswick Hussars overthrew the 13th regiment of French Cuirassiers, in the most complete manner possible.

There were, by Napoleon's own showing, 15,000 French cavalry present at Waterloo. The British, including the King's German Legion, were about 7,000 effective, and they were aided by a brigade of Dutch carbineers, say a thousand strong, and by two feeble squadrons of Brunswick lancers: the total not exceeding 8,300 men. Of these, two brigades, Vivian's and Vandeleur's,—together about 2,000 men,—were posted on the extreme left, and took little, or no share, in the action till the last moment: so

that the battle was, in a great measure, fought by six thousand Allied cavalry against more than double their number of French. And yet at the end of the action the Allied cavalry were masters of the field. While writing this, Mr. Gleig's charming history of the "Hussar" has come into my hands. In the second volume, the admirable narrator in speaking of the battle of Villa-Franca, has the following passage. "It fell to our share to encounter some squadrons of *Grenadiers a cheval*—of all species of cavalry the least efficient, because encumbered by the very nature of their appointments. In addition to their swords and pistols, these men carried long muskets and bayonets, which, like the lancer's spear, were stuck into a sort of boot attached to the saddle, and leaned against their shoulder. With our good sabres we disposed of them in five minutes, and then dashing at the infantry, we produced such confusion and dismay, that the whole column rolled back from the hill like a wave that has broken against a cliff."

These horse-grenadiers,—favourite troops in the French army,—are thoroughly emblematical of French notions of cavalry tactics; and the very appearance of such a corps should settle the value of their views of cavalry action. The truth is that, had the war lasted, had conscriptions and requisitions continued to furnish men and horses, we should, in the end, have had cavalry redoubts and fortifications formed of human *materiel*; every man arrayed and accoutred as a portion of rampart: it was the consummation to which the French system naturally tended. "The squadron will form star-redoubt:"—"Lancers form chevaux-de-frise:" would sound very well, and the last manœuvre would, at least, put the lances to some use.

The advantages and disadvantages of the British cavalry

were entirely the reverse of those which we have been ascribing to the French.

The British cavalry possessed, as men, the same advantages as the infantry; they were besides good horsemen, for the English are naturally the best christian horsemen in Europe; they were far better mounted, and were mostly excellent swordsmen: above all, the manly hand-to-hand combat of cavalry, is more congenial to the spirit of our people, and to their personal strength and activity, than the miserable trigger-pulling system of infantry warfare.

In the first volume of the "Hussar," it is mentioned, that a Corporal Marshal of the 20th Light Dragoons, a strong, active, and well-mounted soldier, encountered, single-handed, four French horsemen, slew two of them, and kept the other two at bay till extricated from his dangerous position. The fact alone speaks volumes, and is worth a hundred lectures on cavalry tactics. The man should have been promoted, and the action held up to admiration: it would have found plenty of imitators, for there were plenty of men equal to such conduct in every troop and squadron.

If, with such decisive advantages, the British cavalry made, after all, but a secondary figure during the war,—and we are not discussing the point,—the causes of their failure must be sought for in circumstances over which the men and officers had, comparatively, little influence.

Cavalry is essentially an offensive force, and appears to advantage only under a bold, enterprising system of strategy; and ours was, owing to the feeble military policy of the government, exactly the reverse. Before we took the field, a political party had, as before stated, so completely browbeat the army and the military administration, that the troops thought themselves almost incapable of any great

professional exertion; while the powers in authority hardly dared to excite, and call forth, the confidence and energy most requisite in the actions of war. We were told to powder our heads, square our hats, know our places on parade, attend to stable duty, but never to presume to think ourselves equal to the French, or to entertain a single military idea, beyond the ordinary routine of garrison or field-day duty. That, after such training, military talents should have sprung up, in any branch of the service, is wonderful enough: that they would spring up last and least in the cavalry, whose very essence is daring and enterprise, must be sufficiently evident; and so indeed it proved.

Foreign officers, who are not in general very capable of understanding and appreciating our national character, and consequently unfit to command our soldiers, also imported and put into our heads some mistaken cavalry notions. Fancying that heavy men, mounted on slight blood horses, unequal to the weight they had to carry, constituted light cavalry, though they were of course, the heaviest of the heavy, we almost destroyed the old English light dragoons, who were equal to cope with any French cavalry, and substituted hussars, too often mounted on horses unequal to their weight. We say too often, because in Sir John Moore's campaign, the hussars still had the old English light dragoon horse. This whim, after causing, like all military errors, the loss of many brave men, has now fortunately passed away. We are numerically, indeed, too weak in cavalry, and too strong in the qualities requisite for forming good cavalry, to entertain an exclusive set of Cossack or Hungarian skirmishers. The Turks never made any distinction in this matter, they had nothing answering to a heavy cavalry, and never asked whether the Russian

cavalry opposed to them were light or heavy; but invariably made light work of the heaviest of the Muscovites, whenever they could fairly close with them. Nor need we go so far for examples of what can be effected by really good light cavalry; for Sir John Moore's campaign offers them in abundance. To mention but one of these: Captain Jones of the 10th, having only thirty men of his regiment with him, attacked a hundred of the enemy, who were besides, advantageously posted, and completely routed them. And at a later period, shortly before the battle of Busaco, Captain White attacked, with his single troop of the 13th dragoons, a superior body of French cavalry, and not only overthrew, but killed, wounded, or captured, every man of them. The cavalry have thus shown what they can do, and must be prepared, whether in great or in small parties, to act up to the standard they have themselves established.

Many other instances of superiority of British over French cavalry, might here be mentioned; but we shall add only one; as it shows, not merely great gallantry, but shows how much may be effected by discipline, knowledge of duty, and by the confidence which men and officers should, at all times, be able to repose in each other's skill and bravery.

At the battle of Salamanca, Colonel Ahrenshield's brigade, composed of the 14th Light Dragoons and 1st Hussars of the King's German Legion, were directed to flank and support the 3d division in their attack on the extreme left of the French. As soon as the advance commenced, Colonel Ahrenshield moved the cavalry to the right, in order to clear the front of the infantry and to keep on the same alignment with them. While executing this move-

ment, he was informed that a body of French cavalry were seen in echellon, behind the left of their infantry, which, as it is well known, were also advancing at the moment when assailed by Sir Edward Pakenham. The Colonel, on receiving this intimation, instantly wheeled the 1st Hussars into line, and leaving two squadrons of the 14th Light Dragoons in reserve, filed with the Germans, from the centre of squadrons; crossed the ravine of the Zurguen, ascended the opposite hill, which was extremely steep, and formed up in the very face of the French cavalry, who struck not a single blow to prevent the movement. Their inactivity met with deserved reward; for the Germans were no sooner in line, than they charged, overthrew and pursued them along the ridge. The rout had not, however, proceeded far, when a second regiment of French cavalry advanced, to take up the fugitives, and avenge the fate of their comrades. The situation of the hussars was now perilous in the extreme. Broken by their own success, a new enemy, regularly formed, advancing in front, and the steep and difficult ravine in the rear. Skill, courage, and promptness could alone save them from the most signal disaster; but, in that gallant corps these qualities were always forthcoming. The assemblè was instantly sounded: the commanders of troops galloped back at speed, to the very edge of the ravine: then turned; and collected and re-formed their men as they again advanced upon the new enemy; who was charged and defeated by the very men he already looked upon as his certain prey. This charge was only one of a number made during the battle of Salamanca (the entire brigade made a third charge towards the end of the day) and does not, like Kellerman's charge at Marengo, stand by itself as a world-changing

event; but, looked upon as a feat of arms, it is unsurpassed, perhaps, in cavalry warfare.

The 1st Hussars it may be said, were German and not British cavalry; but they formed part of the British army, shared in the general spirit of that army, and partook of its feelings and military opinions. That the officers of these corps possessed more professional confidence than the officers of the British regiments, is very probable: the liberal doctrine then so prevalent in England, that British officers were absolutely incapable, did not extend to the Germans, who were allowed to think for themselves, and who fully justified the trust thus reposed in them.

To return, however, to the more direct thread of our inquiry.

If the question of superiority between the cavalry of the two nations is to be decided by the greatness of the results, which their actions produced during the war; then we must certainly accord that superiority to the French. They had wider fields of action thrown open to them, than any which fell to the share of the British; and no civilized armies had ever appeared so strong in cavalry as the armies of Napoleon. A boundless and irresponsible command of men inspired the French officers with great confidence, which every success naturally heightened, and which was again augmented by the natural gallantry and intelligence for which all French armies are distinguished, particularly in times of prosperity. That this irresponsible command of men caused vast numbers to be sacrificed by officers, in useless or impracticable undertakings merely for the gratification of personal ambition, can hardly be doubted. On the other hand, it produced a number of very able officers in all ranks; though the real nature of cavalry action was

evidently not understood, by the French cavalry. The mass of an army can only obtain their general professional views from their chiefs and commanders; and when we see entire bodies of cavalry, systematically receiving, at a halt, the charge of abler foes; and find heavy armed cuirassiers regularly charging, not only in column, but actually at a trot, we are fully justified in saying, that the men from whom such modes of proceeding emanated, understood absolutely nothing of the real force and nature of cavalry action.

But if we decide the question here under trial, by a reference to the actions fought between the French and English cavalry, or by a reference to just tactical principles, existing in the two armies; then, we must decide it, out and out, in favour of the British.

They were always victorious in fair cavalry combats; they were far better tacticians, made a full use of the impulse of their horses, and never forsook the sword for the pistol or carbine. On the other hand, it is possible, and this is an important point in the inquiry, that British cavalry did not add so much moral force to a British army as French cavalry did to a French one. This, however, is mere matter of conjecture, and admits not of being brought out by demonstration: but the confidence that soldiers generally feel disposed to place in horsemen, will have been observed by most military men.

As the arms used by the cavalry of the two countries should go for something in any inquiry of this nature, we must say a few words on that subject also.

The French having been our predecessors in taking back the lance and cuirass, should bear a greater share of the ridicule attendant on these puerilities, than any which can

fall to our share: they set the fashion, we only followed. Say what we will, manufacture as we can, the lance must ever remain, a two-handed weapon;* and as the present race of mortals have only two hands, one of which the soldier requires for the guidance of his horse, he has evidently but one disposable hand, wherewith to flourish his long, unwieldy, but pretty flag-adorned lance. The old Turkish Timariot cavalry, the best horsemen the world ever beheld, and who, from their skill with the *jereed*, would have been first-rate lancers, used only the scimitar against the enemy: and no christian cavalry were ever deemed their equals in combat. When these men were in the humour for fighting,—and totally destitute of discipline, that was altogether a matter of chance,—and when the *Giaurs* were fairly accessible, then came the "tug of war" indeed. Their onsets are described, by some of those who survived such meetings, as having resembled more an onrush of infuriated fiends, than a mere advance to battle of ordinary mortals. Numbers never daunted them; and their foes paid as dearly for victory as for defeat. The Turks came on to slay Infidels, and dreadful was the havoc made by their scimitars, but they knew not how to follow up such success: if driven back by weight of numbers, their skill in arms, and their admirable horsemanship, placed pursuit entirely out of the question. General Vallentini, who served against them in 1812, was so convinced of their superiority over all christian cavalry, that in his "Instructions for a Turkish War," he places his cavalry, who are all lancers and cuiras-

* We are speaking of the lance as now used in European armies; and not the javelin, thrown in the manner of the ancients, and still used by some of the Eastern nations,—of this weapon we know nothing.

siers, in oblong squares protected by infantry and artillery. Would it not have been a better plan to have left the incapables at home?

As to the cuirass again, it is heavy and cumbersome: it adds to the weight which the horse has to carry, and impedes the action of the soldier, who should be as pliant on horseback as possible. Nor can the security it affords, counterbalance these disadvantages. In cavalry combats, most of the wounds inflicted, are head, shoulder, or arm wounds; the body wounds are comparatively few, and the more active the man is, the less will he be exposed to such wounds. Front-on, the cuirass offers, no doubt, some protection from the fire of the infantry; but, accessible infantry, must have time to give the cavalry one fire only: it must be their first and last, and will not, at the best, be very destructive, nor will the few shots warded off, atone for the constant annoyance inflicted on the soldier, by his heavy and ponderous armour. When infantry cannot be charged, the best plan, of course, is to keep the cavalry as much out of the range of fire as possible. That this cannot always be effected, is certain: but the cuirass is a never-ceasing drawback to the soldier's efficiency, and affords, at the best, but slight, precarious, and accidental protection. The advantages of the cuirass, are too imperceptible, to be purchased at the price of such constant annoyance: for, were we to go out on the principle of making great sacrifices for small benefits, we might end by arraying the whole army, light infantry and all, in shining steel. It is skill, strength and speed, which render the horseman formidable in these days. It is from the impulse derived from the speed of the horse, that the rider derives the advantage which, from a confusion of ideas, we sometimes ascribe to the weight of

the horse: and it is the power and strength of speed, which we must therefore cherish, instead of the imaginary power derived from weight. Of course, we do not want race-horses, but horses possessed of sufficient blood, bone, strength, and action, freely to carry the weight of the soldier, and his arms, and to give him, when required, all the power of impulse derived from that strength and speed.

There can only be one species of good cavalry, therefore; strong and active cavalry. They may be termed, at pleasure, either light or heavy; hussars or dragoons; but their arms, horses, and appointments must be assimilated to what is most useful in the field. In that case they will have neither lancers nor cuirasses; and will approach nearer to the old English light dragoon than to any other description of christian cavalry. The old Turkish model, is still too far above us, to be contemplated with any prospect of successful imitation. Why it should be so, the learned in tactics may decide.

Swords, saddles, carbines,—pistols are not worth mentioning,—should all, perhaps, come under examination; but the writer has not seen any of the arms and appointments lately issued to the troops, so that he can speak only of those which were in use during the war.

The sword, as the first arm of the cavalry, and, when properly used, the most formidable weapon ever put into the destroying hand of man, must, of course, take precedence. In this arm, the French had some advantage; their dragoon sword was a light and pretty well poised weapon; whereas the sabres of the British, were all bad, particularly those of the light cavalry: they were ill poised, and lay ill in the hand, the greatest faults that swords can possibly have. Go into any sword-cutler's shop in London,

and the chances are, that you will not find a single well poised, and well mounted sword, unless accident throws a Turkish scimitar or an old Highland claymore in your way. We purposely say old Highland claymore, for the modern ones are simply ridiculous, and fit only for fancy chieftains to sport at fancy balls. Of all modern swords the Turkish scimitar is by far the best mounted:—not the overbent scimitar, for we do not understand the use of these weapons,—but those, which, like the best of them, are only slightly curved towards the point. The hand fits into the hilt, as into a glove; the very grasp of such a sword, makes you feel like a different and more independent man; and you almost begin to understand the actions performed by its aid.

In England arms are made by manufacturers, often very admirable workmen, and good judges of mere workmanship; but understanding nothing of the use of arms, and therefore unable to fashion them to the best advantage.

The English light-dragoon carbine, was a good, handy, serviceable weapon of its kind, and far superior to the French carbine, which it became so much the fashion to admire. Of pistols it is needless to speak, for at the distance of twenty yards, a stone thrown with the hand, would probably be a more formidable missile than a pistol shot fired by a modern horseman. Why the horseman, with whom firing *should* be a secondary thing altogether, is provided with two fire-locks, a pistol and carbine, while the infantry soldier, the real *fireman*, has only his musket, is a question on which the martinets of the two services may try their wisdom. But some object would be gained if the pistol and carbine of the cavalry, could be combined by means of a spring stock; or by assimilating the modern

pistol more to the long and formidable pistol of the seventeenth century, which threw a ball to a sufficient distance; and, when fired over the arm, threw it, perhaps, with as much accuracy as an ordinary carbine.

What Board or authority selects the arms and determines on the description of arms to be provided for the British soldier? It is evidently a duty of high responsibility, and should be exercised only by those who understand something of the use of arms; who know a well poised, from an ill poised sword; and know what the right line of arm means, and how much it is influenced by the stocking of the musket, and the right fitting of the butt to the shoulder. There is, unfortunately, too much reason to think that very little attention was paid to these important points during the war. With modern statesmen, the saving of money, seems always to have been more an object than the saving of blood.

It was one of the great evils under which the army laboured, that officers were not encouraged, perhaps not even allowed, to attend to professional details, to elementary tactics or points of equipment. Knowledge was, we suspect, looked upon as little better than a breach of discipline: authorities seemed to forget, that no one can possess a grain of real military knowledge, without being fully convinced, that implicit obedience is the first and most essential duty of a soldier. But this was not seen, and military knowledge was strictly confined to an acquaintance, sometimes slight enough, indeed, with the books of regulations; but whether those regulations were good or bad, whether the arms employed were ill or well adapted to the nature of the service, were matters about which the officers were not expected to concern themselves;

and the consequence was that the arms were all very bad, even of their kind. No one can ever become a great artist, or artisan, without a perfect knowledge of what can be effected by the tools which he uses, or brought out by the materials he has to work upon; but in military matters this self-evident truth is not considered. Tools are furnished and material is furnished; but what they can effect, is a thing about which few seem to trouble themselves, and against the cavalry this great error tells far worse even than against the infantry.

The Berlin Military Journal,* a periodical distinguished for the very highest ability, has, in part 4, 1833, the following observation in a review of some tactical work by a Major Brand. "The accompanying passage," says the reviewer, "contains an indirect accusation against the cavalry which may not, perhaps, be altogether destitute of foundation." "The contradictions in the views entertained by tacticians, regarding the principles of cavalry action, lead to the belief that the system of cavalry tactics has not yet attained the degree of perfection of which it is susceptible. It also follows, from the manner in which the cavalry has been employed in our time, that the ideas respecting its powers and duties have not been very clearly understood, so that much is still left for improvement in this respect. We should not, perhaps, be going too far, were we to say, that the cavalry has rather retrograded than advanced since the period of the seven years war."— "Without," resumes the reviewer, "entering on the question, whether the generals and leaders who commanded armies during the late wars, knew, or did not know, how to employ the numerous bodies of cavalry placed at their

* Militair-Literatur Zeitung, viertes heft, 1833.

disposal, we shall content ourselves with simply asking,—what is now done for the improvement and higher instruction of the cavalry? We have no particular country in view, and are speaking generally,—and the answer to our question must be—that very little is anywhere done for the improvement of this arm."

If little is done for the cavalry, even in the military states of the continent, we suspect that still lesss is done for them in England. In the British army, an officer enters the cavalry by the aid of money or interest, without its ever being asked, or known, how far he is qualified for that particular service. He enters, of course, without any previous knowledge of his duty, as there is no school in the country which can furnish him with the requisite information should he have felt disposed to study. Many officers also enter the cavalry for the mere purpose of passing away a few years in a dashing and agreeable manner; and some even for the simple purpose of wearing a fine uniform. These gentlemen naturally content themselves with the quantity of knowledge necessary for going through the ordinary routine of orderly and parade duty: but, should they have friends and money, they may nevertheless rise in rank if disposed to persevere. If the young officer is inclined to attend, he may, when he joins his regiment, become a good rider, acquire a knowledge of orderly and stable duty, and learn to command a squadron at a field-day. If he rises to be field-officer, he may, by application, become a good drill, and good home commander of a regiment. This is supposing that he exerts himself, because it has happened that officers have continued for years in the service without understanding even the ordinary routine of home duty. It also happened,

that some officers, who at home, had acquired an excellent reputation, cut a most lamentable figure on their very first appearance in the Peninsula. If the young officer wishes to become acquainted with the higher duties of the service, he cannot find a single book in the English language that will reward the trouble of perusal; if he reads French, and the number of those who formerly read even French, was very limited, he will find little more. If he reads German, which few take the trouble of learning, he will be certain to find the solid information that may be acquired so mixed up with rubbish and contradictions, that without inducement to study, he can hardly be expected to persevere in the search: and in the English army there is no inducement to study.*

Perhaps it may be said, that young officers will now derive knowledge and information, from the example and experience of their seniors. We suspect that little benefit can be derived from this source. Experience becomes as often a false, as a just teacher, unless where there is judgement and ability ready to profit by its lessons. And the views of cavalry action and duty, taken up by cavalry officers during the war, are not only as numerous as they are contradictory; but they are nowhere ably and distinctly recorded, even for the benefit of those who might be disposed to profit by them.

* Much of what is here said, applies, in fact, to the infantry also, but the evil does not tell so strongly against them; because they are a slower and less independent arm. In the cavalry, regiments and squadrons are often called upon to act important and independent parts; and quickness of action and resolve are indispensable. In the junior ranks of the cavalry, far greater ability is, or should be required, from the officers, than in the junior ranks of the infantry. But, as the cavalry are, after all, but a secondary or auxiliary arm, the necessity for the higher abilities changes with augmenting rank.

During Sir John Moore's campaign, the right spirit was infused into the cavalry; and, in mere cavalry combats, they certainly carried every thing before them in a manner that could not be surpassed: and the result of the experience then gathered, would naturally be of the best kind. In the next campaign, the failure of the 23rd regiment at Talavera; later still, the repulse near the Coa, and the defeat sustained in the plain of Merida, confirmed the mistaken notion, that cavalry could effect nothing against infantry squares: and here unreflecting experience was detrimental in the highest degree. The small number of cavalry present with the army, during the campaign of 1810 and 1811, rendered it necessary to employ them with great caution, a circumstance that naturally tended to depress, in something, the boundless confidence formerly acquired; and here again, unreflecting experience only learned caution,—a dangerous thing in cavalry warfare,—without always perceiving the full force of the cause which rendered that caution necessary. The action of Usagre, and some others of minor note, were still fought in the olden style; but various untoward events, trifling, perhaps, in themselves, proved too clearly that the confident spirit of victory was no longer universal. In 1812, the cavalry were considerably augmented, and some good blows were struck; but when still stronger, they contributed little towards the success of the Vittoria campaign; and in the Pyrenees and the south of France, the ground was in general unfavourable for their action. How much the conduct of the British cavalry at Waterloo, and the mode in which they were employed on that occasion, has been discussed, it is needless to say, as the fact alone proves, how divided are the opinions of experienced officers, even

on the most essential points of cavalry service: Nor could it possibly be otherwise, considering that there existed no acknowledged, well defined, and generally understood principle of cavalry actions. Every man judged in fact for himself, according to the promptings of his spirit, or talents. Some officers were martinets, and men of science; and expected to effect great things by manœuvres and demonstrations: with them excess of daring,—the essence, perhaps of all cavalry action, was mere fool-hardiness; and a bold onset, only a last and half-barbarous resource. Others were admirable parade officers, and though personally brave, for bravery was hardly ever wanting, saw only difficulties and impracticabilities the moment they were off their level drill grounds. While some again, were actually liberals, and looked upon an act of daring, as a foolish, and unjust undervaluing of the enemy. Captain Jones of the 10th must have been an illiberal, or he would never, with his thirty men, have attacked a hundred adversaries.

That many very able cavalry officers were formed during the war, is not to be disputed; but those officers owed every thing to their own zeal and ability: they had neither guides, nor instructors; and no encouragement, except what they derived from their own honourable feelings. Endowed with genius and spirit, events became their instructors: but such men are rare in all times, and in all professions, and it is the duty of a government, therefore, to provide as much instruction, as possible, for its officers, in order to spare the effusion of blood at the expense of which knowledge must otherwise be purchased. And though a mere headful of learning will never, of itself, make a man an officer, and least of all a cavalry officer, yet

good instruction necessarily leads to reflection, helps to expand the views, and to call forth and develope the qualities most essential to the military character. But in Britain, the cavalry officer can look for no such instruction, and in many cases it is not even deemed desirable, as gentlemen know, that money and interest are sufficient to command promotion. Even the ordinary tactical movements of the cavalry, have not kept pace with the improved rapidity of infantry formations, and artillery practice: and as to the proper time, mode and manner of best employing the cavalry, according to circumstances, we are as much in the dark as ever. No cavalry officer has deigned to write on professional subjects; and from an infantry officer, hints on cavalry duty might not, perhaps, be well received: though it is evident that any man who is a horseman, a swordsman, and who understands the general object, as well as the principles of movements, should, if otherwise capable, be as able to write on cavalry action, as the mere holder of a cavalry commission.

It will probably be said that, in case of another war, we shall gradually acquire knowledge and experience, just as we acquired them before. This means, in plain English, that, fortune willing, we shall after years of disaster, again purchase, with the lives of brave men, sufficient knowledge and success to help us through our difficulties: it is a noble doctrine, no doubt, and likely enough to be acted upon. We shall again see stars and decorations bestowed; as often to conceal doubtful results, as to reward high conduct; we shall again see command and promotion given according to wealth, rank, and family connexion. But where to find the authority that shall instruct the horseman when he may give the reins to courage and imagination

and strike for victory beyond the bounds of conventional-war, and drill-ground rules; where is the plume crested official that shall point out to him the limits before which even the boldest must pause?—Echo answers, "Pause," and gives the only response to our questions.—A band of daring horsemen, bursting through the smoke of a whole day's idly expended ammunition; breaking, with the full force of gallant steeds, right in upon an astonished and exhausted foe, may at times sweep entire hosts of tiralleurs, grenadiers, and cannoniers from the field. But how to prepare, and discover the time for striking such blows; how to strike them, when the time is discovered,—these are tasks towards the accomplishment of which, no aid is furnished to the cavalry officer; valuable opportunities are lost, as many were lost during the war, and thousands must again toil, fight and bleed, before the doubts and errors of a moment can be redeemed.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF CAVALRY WARFARE.

" Tout escadron qui ne peut charger deux mille pas à toute jambe, sans se rompre, n'est jamais propre à la guerre." MARSHAL SAXE.

WE cannot better illustrate the subject of the foregoing paper than by translating the account which Captain Ganzauge, of the Prussian Lancer Guard, gives, in his *Kriegswissenschäftliche Analecten*," of three actions fought during the campaign of 1813, between some corps of French cavalry, and a brigade of Cossacks to which the able intelligent author was himself attached. As illustrations of French cavalry tactics, these actions are absolute Gems, as the newspapers say of the Annuals, and Gems therefore they shall be called.

GEM THE FIRST.

" IT was on the 19th of August, soon after the expiration of the armistice, when the French troops had already begun to press back the Allies in the direction of Berlin and Potsdam, that the regiments of Don Cossacks, under the command of Colonel Bichalow, received orders to undertake a *reconnoissance* in the direction of Lükenwalde. These troops, who had bivouacked on the Treboin road,

advanced in consequence through Scharfenbrück and Walterdoff. And as the French picquets, stationed in the latter places, retired at our approach, we soon obtained a full view of the meadows that extend to the northward and eastward of Lükenwalde.

"While we were yet engaged in driving back the advanced parties, a mass of cavalry, greatly exceeding us in number, advanced in haste from the town, and drew up in our front; they were formed in column of squadrons, and as the skirmishers fell back, and joined the main body, we soon had nothing but this heavy mass before us. Though the Cossacks could gain little in a contest with so large a force, it was equally evident that still less was to be risked in assailing them; so that urged on, partly by their natural instinct, and partly by command, they pushed forward to the attack. The French advanced at a short trot to meet us, and under the apprehension, probably, that the Russians would attempt to dash into the intervals between the squadrons, these were closed up, almost to quarter distance. Thus formed, they bore directly upon the centre of our line, which instantly opened out; the Cossacks, throwing themselves on the flanks and in the rear of the hostile column, and the French, finding no enemy to contend with in front, soon halted, whilst the warriors of the Don kept firing into the mass, or spearing the flank files of their enemies. The French had by this time got into such complete confusion, that they could undertake no evolution of any kind, and the Cossacks, on their part, totally unable to move in compact order, never thought of dispersing, by a bold onset, the helpless mob they were thus assailing; but perfectly conscious that, as individual horsemen, they had nothing to dread from such unskilful adversaries, they

continued to fire at them, and to execute partial charges whenever opportunities offered.

"The flank files of the French having faced outwards, and their rear files having gone to the right-about, the whole party sprung their carbines, and a regular, if not very destructive, *fusillade* ensued, and lasted for upwards of half an hour. At the expiration of this time, the heads of some infantry columns were seen advancing from Lükenwalde towards the meadows on which we were fighting: they were accompanied by artillery, and the first shots fired at us served as a signal for the release of the column of cavalry so singularly surrounded. Colonel Bichalow, perceiving that nothing could be effected against so superior a force, withdrew his troops by the way of Scharfenbrück, without being pursued by a single Frenchman.

It was perfectly evident, that a want of skill in manœuvring, and a total ignorance of the real nature of cavalry action, had induced the French to crowd together into that ominous column. One third of their number, well and bravely led, would have driven the three regiments of Cossacks from the field with perfect ease; whereas by the conduct pursued, they owed their liberation only to the speedy advance of their infantry and artillery. This action also gave ample proofs of the utter unfitness of the Cossacks for anything like a home charge, as well as of the little that can be effected by their loose and scattered mode of fighting.

GEM THE SECOND.

"Soon after the battle of Dennewitz, when the Cossack regiments, already named, were hovering about Konigsbrück, near Dresden; Colonel Bichalow was ordered to

observe, and if possible to attack, the French cavalry that had been pushed forward from the latter place towards Grossen-Hayn. We broke up, therefore, on the 18th of September, and proceeded to Esteleverda. Here we learnt that the villages to the south of Muhlberg were occupied by French cavalry, and it was immediately resolved to attack the enemy in their quarters. Before we attained the heath, extending between Muhlberg and Spanberg, we fell in with General Ilowaisky, who assumed the command of the whole Cossack force, which, including the regiment he brought along with him, amounted in all to about 1200 men. Whether this meeting was accidental, or the result of previous arrangement, I pretend not to know. As soon as we had fairly cleared the wood of Muhlberg, we discovered the French cavalry near Borack, some already formed, others advancing at a trot from the villages farther in the rear. I was afterwards told by the prisoners, that they had two thousand men present on the ground.

"While the Cossacks were occupied in forming up, the French had also completed their movement; their entire body, except a feeble reserve placed at a considerable distance behind, was formed, *en muraille*, in a single line, without intervals. The Cossacks threw themselves upon the unwieldy mass, and were received with a sharp fire from the enemy's carbines; the French had not even drawn their sabres. The Russians, at first, gave way before this fire; and whilst they were again forming and preparing for another onset, a movement was observed in the enemy's line. I expected that we were to be attacked; but I was mistaken, for the French only wheeled onwards with a view to gain ground for the necessary intervals between their squadrons, and having effected this, they again

wheeled up. The object of this change of formation was, I suppose, to prevent their flanks from being turned; a mode of attack the Cossacks adopt instinctively on all occasions.

"Both parties got ready with their new arrangements about the same time. The Cossacks were pretty sharply told not to shrink from the fire of the carbines; and officers rode behind the line with orders to cut down the first man who should fall back. Several squadrons were also appointed to turn the enemy during the progress of the front attack. These orders were punctually obeyed; the Cossacks pressed in upon the French, and surrounded their separate squadrons; and I had here an opportunity of seeing several of the enemy's dragoons, who had fired their carbines at us, cut down or speared before they could put sword in hand. At first, the French defended themselves as well as men could do, when contending at a halt against active and constantly-moving enemies; but some of the squadrons having turned, the rest gradually followed the example. The reserve also, instead of advancing to the support of the front line, only joined the flight; so that in a short time the entire plain, as far as the wood of Jacobsthal, towards which every one hurried, was covered with scattered horsemen. Not a single half squadron was to be seen together,—it was a complete chase; during which most of those who were afterwards taken, fell from their horses. Behind the heath which we entered on passing the wood, and which was the last scene of this extraordinary race, a line of French cuirassiers was unexpectedly discovered, and their calm and imposing attitude at once commanded halt, without any order to that effect having been at all found necessary. Satisfied with our victory, we returned through the wood to Mühlberg.

"The defeat of the French on this occasion was entirely owing to their inability to move, and to the want of confidence in their own prowess, naturally resulting from such a deficiency.

GEM THE THIRD.

"WHEN, on the 11th of October, Colonel Bichalow's brigade of Cossacks, forming the advanced guard of General Bulow's corps, was halting at Debitch, their picquets got entangled in a skirmish with those of the enemy stationed on the road to Eilenburg. As the French came up in some strength, they easily drove back the Russians, so that Colonel Bichalow was forced to send a couple of hundred men to the support of his skirmishers, in order to allow the rest of the brigade to feed their horses at leisure. I accompanied this detachment, and had an opportunity of witnessing the whole of the action that ensued.

"At a short distance behind the village of Berendorff, through which, in our turn, we drove the French, the ground forms a few wave-like ridges, covered here and there with a little underwood. As we approached these hillocks, and while very carelessly driving the French division before us, a regiment of Chasseurs that had been concealed by the inequality of the ground, suddenly made their appearance. Fortunately for us, they attacked us only on a trot, and in column of squadrons, so that we easily evaded the onset of these superior numbers. The officer who commanded the Cossacks had, at the commencement of the affair, left one-half of his men behind, to act as a reserve,—an arrangement that, in a little time, again brought the action to a stand; for as soon as this second line joined us, the French halted, threw out skirmishers, and, going to the right-about, retired at a trot, followed by

the whole swarm of Cossacks, who, every moment expected to see their enemies get into confusion; every Cossack being firmly convinced that, as an individual horseman, he had then nothing to dread from such unskilful riders. We had thus followed the French column back to the very hill where they first attacked us, when we perceived another body of their cavalry advancing, at a round trot, against our left flank; they appeared to consist of two squadrons, and proved, as I afterwards learned, to be the Hussars of Alsace. As the commander of the Cossacks had previously sent to acquaint Colonel Bichalow that we were engaged with a superior enemy, and was consequently in momentary expectation of being reinforced, he did not think it too hazardous to detach the division of his left wing in the direction of the advancing hussars, whilst he remained with the centre and right opposed to the Chasseurs, who had again halted, and fronted. In this we were, however, something out of our reckoning, for these hussars now executed, by regular signal, an admirable attack against us. As soon as they were put to a gallop, two squadrons that had been posted behind the centre, came up from the rear at full speed, and formed, one on the right and one on the left, of the centre squadrons; the whole regiment then, without firing a single shot, threw themselves right down upon us; and, in two minutes, every Cossack was swept from the ground."—Recollect, reader, *d'autres gens d'autres soins.* —"The Chasseurs took no part in this charge, and only followed at a trot. We were driven headlong towards Berendorff, and as it was impossible to ride round the place with exhausted horses incapable of clearing the ditches that divide the adjacent fields, every one hurried towards the entrance of the village, where friends and foes got com-

pletely jammed together, so that a sharp hand-to-hand combat was the natural consequence. These sort of close encounters are not, as is well-known, the result of all cavalry actions; and the Cossacks, who carefully avoid them whenever it is possible, were now only forced into the fight by the absolute necessity of self-defence. At this most critical moment, and at the height of our need, Colonel Bichalow arrived to our assistance with the rest of the brigade. His Cossacks having galloped round the village, rushed with their usual war-cry on the already disordered Hussars: those who were still able, instantly turned and fled, but the bravest and foremost, who fought with us in the streets, were hemmed in, and all either killed, wounded, or taken. The fugitives threw themselves in confusion on the Chasseurs, who, during the action, had approached too near the village; the formation of these tardy horsemen also gave way before this crowd of pursuers and pursued, the whole French mass got into disorder, and the complete route and chase, so frequently consequent on cavalry actions, immediately ensued. We, on our parts, spurred after the flying enemy as fast as we could, till we again reached the height before spoken of, when the wizzing of some howitzer shells that fell amongst us, promptly brought us to a halt; and Colonel Bichalow concluding that he had a superior enemy in front, desisted from further pursuit, leaving only a small picquet to observe the French, who soon disappeared from the field.

"This action did not last more than half an hour; as all the movements here described followed each other with the greatest rapidity. We captured about a hundred horses, and sustained a loss that was far from inconsiderable."

This we take it, is not an ordinary gem, but a jewel of first water and exquisite lustre.

Before going any further, let us first see what is the opinion entertained of the Cossacks by the highest military authority to which we can refer; it will help us to form a correct estimate of the warriors with whom we have just seen them engaged. Frederick II., speaking of them, says—"*Quiconque fait bonne contenance n'a pas grands risques a courir; car le regiment de Ziethen, bien inferieur en nombre se soutint seul contre eux sans qu il y eut un Houssard de pris ou de blessé.*" Having established this point, let us next recollect that the cavalry who, in column and at a trot, attacked such feeble troops, and afterwards formed a kind of solid mob in order to repel them by a fire of carbines; who drew up in line to contend, in regular *fusillade*, with the same foes; who forgot that they had sabres by their sides, and thought of their spurs only when retiring: that these men who, to say nothing more, charged at a trot and fled at a gallop, were the soldiers of Napoleon, the boasted military genius of our time. These very soldiers formed part of the army under his immediate command; fought, perhaps, under his own eye; had certainly been instructed according to his regulations; and, what is still more important, they were led by officers who had of course been trained up in the views and ideas of cavalry warfare prevalent in the Imperial army.

And what then could those ideas be? As far back as the time of the ancients it was known that ACTION constituted the principal force of the cavalry. To this Charles XII., Frederick, and Seidlitz, proved, by many a gallant deed, that the impulse derived from the strength of the horse should be added. But of these matters the French troops, of whom we have here been speaking, were evidently in utter darkness; they would all, except the brave hussars

of Alsace, have been much better on foot, without either spurs, sabres, or horses; they would then have been only bad infantry, instead of being, as they were, absolute horse-marines incapable of being animated even by the motion of the bounding steeds on which they were mounted.

Perhaps it will be said that the best of the French cavalry had been destroyed in Russia during the previous campaign, and that the examples above quoted prove, after all, nothing more than that three out of the four commanding officers engaged in these actions happened to be men ignorant of their duty; a very reprehensible deficiency certainly, but not one that can be fairly laid to the account of the general system of the army, or to its chief, as there are, no doubt, incapable officers in every service.

Granting, for the present, the whole of this proposition, though the second part does not admit of being maintained; it by no means frees Napoleon and the French army from the charge of having been ignorant of the real strength and nature of cavalry action. I have here laid no stress on the bad horsemanship, and want of skill in manœuvring displayed by the troops, as these glaring deficiencies might, to a certain extent, have resulted from the short time the men had been embodied. I distinctly charge the whole system, that allowed such notions of cavalry warfare to exist, with feebleness and with emanating from ignorant men. Entire regiments of horse drawing-up in line, to use their fire arms like infantry; some corps charging at a trot and in close column; others again, forming solid squares of cavalry (!!!) and defending themselves with their carbines, are practices that could result only from the grossest ignorance. If, in a sabre combat, a man were to grasp the blade, instead of the hilt of his sword, we should not call him a bad fencer,

but should say that he had not a single idea of swordsmanship, and knew not in what consisted the strength of his weapon. It is even so with the French officers who commanded in the actions here described; they knew not what constituted the strength of cavalry, and had not a single just idea of its action, and their instructor must have been equally ignorant. "What, look upon Napoleon as as an ignoramus?" we think we hear the liberal reader exclaim with indignation. It is at his own pleasure, and he may look upon the fencing master, who taught the swordsman above described, as a great genius if so disposed: we do not,—that is all.

That there were many able and enterprising cavalry officers in the French army only proves that men may rise at times above the faulty system under which they have been trained: that Napoleon and his marshals, who presided over such a system, gained splendid victories, proves still less,—for it is easy to give the reins to fortune and to hurl masses of brave men to battle: Attila and Alaric did just as much. It is true, no doubt, that hundreds of volumes have been filled with pompous histories of the actions performed by the French commanders of our age, as well as with the praise bestowed upon them in consequence; equally true it is that stars, dignities, and decorations too often stained with the blood of the brave, have been lavished upon them as well as upon some of their conquerors. But whenever we seek, in the detailed accounts of French victories for tangible and intelligible proofs of the military skill and genius displayed by the victors, we seek in vain, as we find only declamation, and a sickening profusion of adulation, everywhere substituted for logic and for science.

ON MILITARY COSTUME.

New customs,
Though they be never so ridiculous,
Nay, let them be unmanly, yet are followed.

——— SHAKSPEARE. *Henry VIII.*

ACHILLES, poising himself in the new Vulcanian arms, which, "light as feathers, seemed to raise into the air that shepherd of nations," and a soldier of the nineteenth century, strapped into his tight and narrow clothing, would present to the eye a contrast not very flattering to the military taste of modern times. But passing over for the present, the gorgeous panoply brought by the goddess-mother to her fated son, let us just take a look at Agamemnon, more briefly described by Homer as armed and arming for the fight: it will enable the reader fully to appreciate the splendid improvements gradually made, by succeeding ages, in the costume of fighting men.

Iris having, by order of Jupiter sounded the réveillée, "Atrides raised his voice and commanded the Greeks to arm, while at the same time he arrayed himself in splendid mail. First, the shining greaves he fastened to his legs with silver buckles; then he adjusted to his breast the cuirass given him, in token of friendship, by Cinyras, when fame had announced, even to distant Cyprus, that

the Greeks were about to cross the seas in their ships, for the purpose of attacking Troy;

> Ten rows of azure steel the work enfold,
> Twice ten of tin, and twelve of ductile gold;

and on each side three azure dragons, resembling the arc of Iris, placed by the son of Saturn in the skies as a memorable sign to men, surrounded the brilliant gorget. The King next suspended over his shoulders, by a gold embroidered baldrick, a silver-sheathed sword, ornamented with golden nails; his entire person is protected by a shield of wondrous workmanship, bordered by ten circles of brass; twenty brass bosses crown its vast convex; Gorgon, surrounded by Flight and Fear, frowns tremendous, over its field; while a three-headed serpent curls, in black folds, along the silver-embroidered thong. Lastly, the monarch placed on his brows the four-fold helm, crested with threatening horse-hair, and adorned with waving plumes; and seized two strong lances, whose sharp points reflect to the very skies, beams of brilliant light. Pleased at the splendid sight, loud shouted both Juno and Minerva, in honour of the gallant king of great Mycena."

Excepting, of course, the gold, embroidery and splendour, belonging only to kings and leaders, the costume here described remained, as far as we can make out, the dress of the Greek soldiers down even to the battle of Leucopetra, the last of their fields. We lately saw, in the Museum at Munich, some ancient Greek statues, found not long ago by a native of that town near the ruins of Pella in Macedon; they represent soldiers in different military attitudes, and wearing arms nearly resembling those we have just described. As beautiful specimens of ancient art, these figures rank next to the Apollo, the Laocoon,

and the Venus; some indeed will go near to rival the fame of the God of Day himself. We were tempted to fancy, or to wish rather, that they might prove to be some of the statues raised by order of Alexander to the memory of those of his soldiers who had fallen in battle.

Besides the arms of which we have spoken, the Greek soldiers wore a short, oval, well-lined cloak, called clamus (χλαμυς), the *sagum* of the Romans; it hung over the left shoulder, was fastened on the breast, and made of red cloth, and must, in addition to the helm and brilliant arms, have given a man a splendid and soldierlike appearance.

Beneath the cuirass, the Greeks wore a red woollen garment, that nearly covered the whole body, and descended from the shoulders almost to the knees. In the earlier ages it was without sleeves; these seem to have been added only at a later period. This chitoon (χιτων), the *tunica* of the Romans, was the *kirtle*, *hoqueton*, and *wamser* of the middle ages, and is the *blouse*, carter's frock, and surtout-coat of the present day, constituting by far the best, and when properly managed, the most elegant military coat yet devised. How it was clipped away, we shall see presently.

We pass over the military costume of the Romans, as it was too like that of the Greeks to deserve more particular attention. In the dark and middle ages we still find the chitoon of the Greeks constituting, under various forms and denominations, the principal garment worn by men of all ranks. There was no dress exclusively military; armour, or harness,—*harnois*—forming, at a time when every man was a soldier, the only difference between the civil and military attire of the laity: the clergy alone had a distinct costume.

This union naturally brought the military attire, if so it can be called, even more under the control of fashion than it has been in later times; and pretty figures it must be allowed that the giddy goddess occasionally made of her followers; for fashion, with as little taste, but with as much power as in our own day, seems in those early times to have had far more invention and imagination. We already find Charlemagne issuing edicts against short cloaks and different other fashions, and playing over-dressed courtiers, various tricks, to punish their love of finery. He sometimes took them out to hunt in rainy weather, leading them through bush and briar, where their silken garments were sure to be torn to rags: and then insisted most kindly on drying and warming the poor gentlemen before blazing fires that completely shrivelled up the costly foreign furs with which their gowns were lined: the monarch himself wearing all the time the simple and substantial Frank dress. The Church also thundered in order to keep fashion within due bounds, and seems to have been particularly severe on gilt or embroidered shoes, long beards, and flowing locks.

An account of the various changes that took place in the military costume of these early ages, would only be a history of fashion, to which we could not do justice without including the ladies as well as the gentlemen.—But, were we writing such a work, we could bring forward many instances of female taste and splendour, and not a few curious extracts from good homilies, directed against their love of finery and extravagance. We already find St. Bernard, the contemporary of the lovely and fashionable Eleonore of Aquitaine, scolding right fiercely about costly brocades and long trains; and the uncourtly Bishop of

Terrouanne going so far, as to tell the ladies that, if Nature had intended them to sweep the roads, she would have provided them with nameless appendages for the express purpose. Not only were paints, and lotions, common in Italy during the thirteenth century, but, sad to tell, dyes for the hair, deemed one of the great inventions of our own age, were as much in use then as they are now.

In all these times there was, as before stated, no exclusively military costume beyond the arms worn in battle, on journeys, on occasions of state, or at moments of danger. But when armies took the field, the parties were generally distinguished from each other by some peculiar mark, cognizance, or ornament. Thus, the Swiss wore white crosses in the Burgundian war, and the English always red ones. By degrees scarfs came into vogue: they were white in the French and red in the Imperial army. Under Louis XII. every captain of gendarmerie had his particular colour and device, which the whole company were obliged to adopt. This was so far altered under Francis I. in 1533, that the men were only obliged to have one sleeve of the uniform colour; and Louis XIII. took away the surcoats altogether from the men-at-arms, in order that the brilliancy of their armour might be fully displayed.

Before proceeding further, however, we must take a brief, but more distinct view of the dress and armour worn in the middle ages.

As it was generally incumbent on the soldiers, till the early part of the seventeenth century, to find their own dress and defensive armour, both varied of course, according to the taste and means of individuals. For the most part, it consisted of an iron skull-cap, called *salado* or *basinet*, a shield, a buff coat, a linen doublet stuffed with

wool or cotton, called *hoqueton*, to which a coat of mail, or *brigantine* was sometimes added. Such men as wanted these appointments were termed naked foot, and received inferior pay.

The defensive armour of the cavalry, knights, and men-at-arms, as the heavy-armed horsemen were called, consisted of a *hauberk* of double mail, composed of ringlets of iron, linked together like a net, that covered the body; and to it were joined a hood, breeches, and *sabatons* or shoes of the same construction. The hands and arms were also defended by gauntlets and sleeves of mail. Commonly under the *hauberk*, though sometimes over it, was worn a loose garment, called *gambasson*, which descended as low as the knees; it was stuffed with wool or cotton, and quilted; the use of it was to deaden the strokes of the sword or lance, which, though they did not divide the mail, might without its interposition severely bruise the body. Under or between the *hauberk* and *gambasson*, a breast-plate of iron, called *plastron*, was occasionally put on. Over all, men of family wore surcoats of satin, velvet, or cloth of gold or silver, richly embroidered with their armorial bearings.

The helmets worn by the men-at-arms were of different forms: some conical or pyramidical, with a small projection called a nasal, to defend the face from a transverse stroke; some cylindrical, covering the whole head down, to below the chin, with apertures for sight and breath; and others in which the face was totally uncovered. Helmets with beavers and visors do not seem to have been in use till the middle of the fourteenth century, about which time the *hauberk* was exchanged by many for plate armour, so called, from being formed of plates of iron. The shield

was made of wood, covered with leather or metal, and ornamented with the armorial bearings of the knights or with other fanciful devices.*

The horses of the men-at-arms were scarcely less encumbered with armour than the riders: their faces and heads were covered with metal masks, called *chamfrons*, from the centre of which projected an iron spike, resembling a unicorn's horn; their necks were sometimes defended by small plates, connected-together by chains called *crinieres* or *manafere*; they had *poitrails* for their breasts, and *flancais* for their flanks; they were sometimes made of brass or iron, but generally of jacket-leather.

In the choice, beauty, high finish, and splendour, of these offensive and defensive arms and horse appointments, the first symptoms of military dandyism are discoverable; and old chroniclers relate with delight, that the *chamfron* of the charger rode at the siege of Harfleur, by the Count of St. Foix, cost 15,000 crowns, and that of the Count of St. Paul's no less than 30,000. But, splendid as these men must have appeared, there could be nothing elegant or soldierlike in the stuffed and bolstered figures of the knights themselves; and as to uniform, it was of course entirely out of the question.

Though it had been the practice, even in very ancient times, to dress small parties of soldiers, or life-guards, in a uniform manner, the English and Belgians were, as far as can be traced, the first who brought large bodies of men, uniformly dressed, into the field. When Philip II., afterwards King of Spain, made his entry into Antwerp, in 1549, he was received by 800 horsemen, clothed in violet and crimson velvet, and by 4000 infantry, all dressed

exactly alike.* The 7000 English who, in 1557, decided the battle of St. Quentin, were mostly in blue uniforms; and those who aided the Dutch at the battle of Nieuport, in 1600, had yellow coats.† We should rather think that the English troops in yellow coats, spoken of by Meteren, were mostly volunteers with their attendants, dressed in the buff-coat which constituted the half-military dress of the period. The chivalrous and enterprising spirit of the age induced noblemen and gentlemen, instead of lounging away their time at Florence or Paris, to make campaigns along with foreign armies, to fit out even entire armaments in support of a cause favourably looked upon by the country at large, and to undertake adventurous expeditions for the discovery and colonization of distant countries. There was no Foreign Enlistment Bill in those days; and good Queen Bess, the most truly British sovereign, perhaps, that ever sat on the throne of these realms, knew how to value, and call forth, in her subjects those high, daring, and adventurous qualities that necessarily constitute the pride and principal strength of empires. The great object of the present age; an age, which, without striking one manly blow, allowed the Russians to take possession of the Dardanelles, is of course to repress all such spirit-stirring qualities, for fear of over-agitating the delicate nerves of the gentlemen of the Stock-Exchange—poor fellows!

The Dutch revolution-war brings us down to the period of the fierce and valiant *Soldadoes*, so admirably delineated in Callot's Military Exercises. In those masterly etchings, may be seen the heavy-armed spearmen, with breast-plate, *tassettes*, and helmet,—the latter already something improved in shape, and verging a little towards the elegance

* Meteren. † Meteren.

of the Greek model. There also is the musketeer, called light-armed at the time, from wearing no defensive armour: his left hand slopes the long musket with perfect ease over his left shoulder, whilst with haughty grace he rather leans on than supports, with his right, the *fourquette* and match. His dress is either a short jacket, and a cloak suspended from the left shoulder, wide breeches, stockings, and shoes with large rosettes; or else it consists of a surtout-coat (the chitoon again of the Greeks,) sometimes fastened with the sword-belt or other band, round the waist, sometimes open. In these admirable drawings we also, for the first time, find the round hat forming part of the military costume. The private soldiers have narrow-brimmed, high-crowned hats, decorated only with flowing bands, or one or two small feathers: the officers, on the contrary, wear large sombreros, richly adorned with plumes. Armour is already very partial amongst the officers, and shields have entirely disappeared. Our own Highlanders alone continued to use them, for upwards of a century, after all other European troops had laid them aside. There is a dashing and independent air about the soldiers of this period, that though far inferior to the martial elegance of the warriors of ancient Greece, is as superior in point of look, to the bolstered and iron-loaded knight and arquebusier of the middle ages, as to the stiff, padded, and pipe-clayed soldier of our own time.

As long as governments merely contracted with captains and colonels to furnish companies and regiments, all arrangements about clothing were settled between the officers and the soldiers they enlisted. A horseman, when not a beggarly fellow, found his own cuirass, skull-cap, buff-coat and cloak: the infantry soldier brought what he had, or could pick up: while the full silk scarf waved in gallant pride,

from the shoulder of the officer. It was only when the different states of Europe took to raising troops themselves, and keeping them permanently together, that they gradually introduced a uniform system of dress into their standing armies; such dress being invariably calculated to cost as little, and to look as fine as possible; leaving all consideration as to the health, comfort, and convenience of the soldiers entirely out of the question. Military costume thus became a matter of first-rate importance, and formed an interesting subject of conversation; its most trifling details rose into consequence, and were watched over with vigilant severity.

Frederick William of Prussia, the father of Frederick the Great, led the way in this new career of ambition; and was so particular about dress, that he would most certainly have placed himself in arrest, had he discovered that his own uniform deviated in the slightest degree from the established regulation. Following the example thus set them, kings, princes, and all men of rank adopted a military costume: in France and Germany the very postilions ended by wearing uniform. Charles XII. and Frederick II., who both exercised such influence over the minds of their contemporaries, never appeared except in uniform; and Joseph II. not only assumed the dress, but even the manners, of a young subaltern. Military costume thus became a subject on which men of fashion exercised their clipping ingenuity; for invent, it seems, they could not; and a pretty appropriate thing they certainly made of it. All martial men powdered and dressed themselves, by degrees, with such care and attention, that they could, in the end, hardly creep about in their short and narrow regulation-coats; the dress was made so tight as almost to prevent the blood from circulating in their veins. Though singly, none

of these soldiers would have borne much resemblance to the "King of Men," described by Homer, yet a whole battalion together, looked and moved like one perfect piece of glittering machinery, quite delectable to the eyes of martinet tacticians.

Berenhorst tells us that he saw a collection of full-length portraits, taken in 1698, and representing a party of Brandenburg grenadiers in the exact costume of the period. As they seem to represent the first complete uniform, and the one on which all subsequent dresses of the kind were modelled, we shall here give his account of them. "Men and officers have blue coats and waistcoats; facings of the same, with yellow buttons; the lining red; and the dress is still made full and wide. The caps are of cloth, something like a short Cattalan cap; not unlike the undress cap worn by the Royals at the commencement of the Peninsular war. It has the arms of the regiment embroidered on a white ground; the rest of the officer's cap is red, that of the private's blue. None of the party yet wear hair-powder. The officers have black stockings, the privates red ones; the cravats of the latter are red, of the former white; all tied with a knot in front. The privates wear their coats (which are only a couple of inches longer than the waistcoats, that reach almost to the knee) open, with the skirts hooked back. Officers and non-commissioned officers, on the contrary, have their coats buttoned down to the bottom. The privates are all armed with muskets, bayonets, and sabres, and retain the yellow bandolier; pouches were therefore still unknown. The coats of the officers are richly laced; they have large gilt gorgets, and the black and silver sash still worn by the officers of the Prussian army." This is, taken all in all, rather a stately

and comfortable kind of attire. We miss, indeed, the helmet, round hat, and dashing air of Callot's Soldadoes, but common sense is not yet offended by the miserable fooleries that followed.

About the period of which we are here speaking, when letters began to exercise some influence, it became pretty apparent to kings and ministers, that the real and only way for states to remain safe, and to keep their just place in the ranks of independent nations, was to be strong and powerful; that is, they were to be rich in money and soldiers. History proved that neither honour, justice, nor integrity of conduct, had ever been able to protect the feeble from the aggressions of the strong. The protocols of diplomacy were estimated exactly as they are now; that is, according to the number of guns and weight of metal by which they could be supported. This idea, whatever Utopian philosophers may think, was not altogether a bad one, had not the new system of tactics which sprung up about the same time, led to the belief, that military strength consisted principally in well-drilled numbers; and that the great art of winning battles was to make thousands give a jerk with the fore-finger of the right hand, exactly at the same time. With such views—not altogether worn out yet—the quality and composition of the men was a matter of very secondary consequence,—their number and mechanical uniformity of movement, together with an appearance capable of delighting the eye of martinet princes and generals was everything. The natural consequence of these unhappy notions was, that all governments set about dressing and drilling as many cheap soldiers as possible. To save farthings, at the expense of the comfort, health, and actual utility of the men, became a sign of political wis-

dom; and the meanness resorted to, even in the reign of Frederick the Great, would not be credited, had we not seen it surpassed in our own time.

The skirts of the wide flowing coats, already described, gradually diminished till they were reduced to the little stripes of shaloon bordering the swallow-tails of modern coatees. The large warm waistcoats vanished entirely; and the easy and comfortable worsted stockings, not very martial-looking articles certainly, were covered, or supplied rather, by long tight linen gaiters that reached over the knee. As these could not be properly tied above the joint, without preventing the soldiers from stepping out, the men were, at one time, actually directed to secure them with pins !!! Yes, reader, pins for warriors !—there is authority for the assertion. The breeches formerly wide, were now, with a view to economy, made as tight as possible; they were made too of white cloth, in order that every spot of dirt might, with greater facility, be immediately hid under a layer of white dirt, called pipe-clay; a compound that causes a dust and atmosphere more injurious to the sight and health of the men than anything that can be conceived. The inside of the soldier's head was a matter as little cared for then, as now, but good care was taken that the outsides, at least, should all be alike. The hair was consequently covered with grease and meal, to the great annoyance of Marshal Saxe, who in vain denounced the filthy folly of the practice. This custom was continued in the British army till the commencement of the Spanish war, when it was abolished at the suggestion of Sir John Moore, by the most valuable general order ever issued in our time.

White breeches and gaiters maintained a longer battle against common sense, and only died, after all, a natural

death; for in the Peninsula, the soldiers of many regiments were actually forced to drag them about in their knapsacks, with a view, no doubt, to lighten the agreeable load the men had to carry. Nor were our cavalry altogether behind the infantry; for to say nothing of the enormous jack-boots, that baffle all powers of ridicule, some regiments of dragoons wore web,—yes, cotton-web pantaloons, as late as the battle of Waterloo.

But to return to the more direct chronological order of the progress of Snip-ocracy.

The cravats, delineated in the pictures already described, soon gave way to the stiff leather stocks, that, more than anything cramp the exertion of a man in the active use of his limbs. The cloth cap was exchanged for the hat, which had originally—when either of very narrow brim, or looped up on one side, in order to admit of the musket being carried on the left shoulder—constituted a neat and rational sort of head dress. It was now, however, looped up on three sides, for no imaginable reason, unless to prevent its affording the slightest protection against either sun or rain; and was, besides, made so very small, that it had no hold on the head, but was tied with a string beneath the *queue*, so that a regular process was necessary for taking it off or putting it on. That the simple fusileers might not have the honour of alone braving the elements with unsheltered heads, the grenadiers were provided with high brass caps, fashioned like candle extinguishers, which at a later period were exchanged for bear-skin caps, both affording as little protection to the soldier as the cocked-hat, and having only, for the honour of the flankers, the advantage of being a good deal heavier, and better adapted for holding the wind or arresting a man's progress through an underwood. The

valour of Napoleon's guards shone out, from beneath a load of bear-skin, that few indeed but the strong and the brave could have supported. Why the poor fellows should have been so punished, is a question which the admirers of the military genius of their leader may explain.

If the cavalry under Frederick surpassed the infantry in just notions of tactics, as indeed they continue to do to this day, they were determined not to surpass them in just notions of dress; for in costume they contrived to set common sense as much at defiance as the best of their infantry comrades had done. They elevated the cocked-hat of the foot soldier to an enormous height, without bringing it farther on the head, or deriving the least additional shelter from its additional size. They seized with avidity on the bear-skin cap, doubly absurd on horseback; and though they never obtained the brass extinguisher peculiar to the grenadiers, they contrived to metamorphose the neat sheep-skin *calpac* of the Turkish *Delhies* into a huge muff-cap, wonderfully adapted, it was thought, to light horsemen, fellows generally six feet in height, who had besides a useless *dolman*, or pelisse suspended from their left shoulder, and were, with a view to active exertions, mounted on small horses totally unequal to the weight they had to carry.

In the colours of their coats the European cavalry surpassed the hues of the rainbow; for the pedantry of military dress had spread from the banks of the Spree to the Tagus on one side, and to the Neva on the other. Some regiments had blue, others white or green, some violet, and some even yellow coats. Those in white or yellow never came to a halt, after a trot of a few hundred yards, without being enveloped in a cloud of pipe-clay dust that com-

pletely concealed them from all eyes, till a friendly puff of wind or shower of rain, again restored the lost warriors to mortal sight.

That battles were won, and gallant actions performed by different armies, notwithstanding these outrageous follies, is true enough; but whether the sufferings they naturally inflicted on the soldiers might not have been spared, and above all, whether more would not have been achieved by men rationally and comfortably dressed, and possessing the free use of their limbs, are questions that seem never to have entered the heads of dandy tacticians.

We are not among the unqualified admirers of Frederick II., but to his honour it must be said that he was not, individually, very particular about the dress of officers: he occasionally gave out an order on the subject, and took up particular fancies for a time, but soon returned to his usual *insouciance*, leaving the tailoring and hair-dressing departments to the care of men whose minds were more on a level with those important branches of the service. And no wonder, for surely no man of high military feeling and genius can ever descend seriously, to occupy himself with the wretched little details so much attended to in latter times. The ridiculous pedantry with which a number of high functionaries watched over the most minute details of dress, made officers almost dependent on tailors and hatters for the security of their commissions; and would furnish a good volume of amusing anecdotes. It too often enabled low-minded men, when in command of regiments, to annoy, by the help of some paltry adjutant, or other equally worthy assistant, those whose professional knowledge and general conduct placed them, on all other points, beyond the reach of persecution. What commanders had ever

higher or juster professional notions than Nelson or Collingwood? Yet will we venture to say that neither of them ever placed an officer under arrest for misbuttoning his coat: and where are the men who, on the land or on the ocean, acted more perfectly up to their professional duties than the officers and sailors of the British navy?

The Duke of Wellington was also totally free from the tailoring mania: in matter of dress he gave pretty nearly *carte blanche*, and the Peninsular army certainly presented the most extraordinary medley of costumes ever beheld. As the fancy dresses always differed, as widely as possible, from the established uniform, it proves how popular that uniform was. After the establishment of the army of occupation at Cambray, his Grace found it necessary, however, to lecture the gentlemen of the head-quarter staff about the number of their epaulettes, aiguillettes, and the quantity of lace which they deemed requisite for the adornment of their pretty persons.

The French revolution-war produced, if no great improvement, at least some change in military costume; for the *sans culottes* warriors of the Republic could not, of course, dress like the soldiers of kings. But none of their numerous innovations seem to have been worth retaining, for with the empire they gradually returned to the cut-away coats, stiff stocks, tight breeches, long gaiters, and bear-skin caps. That they frequently marched in their great coats, which, from having large, wide, and flapping skirts, were necessarily ill adapted to the purpose, seems a proof that their uniforms were tighter and even more uncomfortable than our own. The infantry *chako*, which under Napoleon, gradually supplanted the enormous Bobadil hat of the republicans, is not of French but of

Austrian origin; it was first introduced by Marshal Lascy, inventor of the present great coat, after he had tried a small helmet, that, ill looking as it was, had nevertheless some advantages.

The helmet of Napoleon's dragoons, the only part of the French dress worth imitating, dates from the old *regime*, and has lately been changed, much for the worse, by the soldiers of *la Jeune France*. The worsted epaulet, that ornament so truly French, and which we are sorry to see finding its way into the British army, dates, in like manner, from the time of the Bourbon kings. We believe that the world is indebted to the same line of princes for the first introduction of the bear-skin cap, which still remains as a brilliant illustration of the military genius of the nation that devised it, and of the age that copied and retained it.

We have no power to grant either rewards or decorations, but we can promise the best thanks of the soldiers to the first authority that shall rid the service of bear-skin caps, infantry and light cavalry *chakos*, the ill-shaped helmet of the dragoons, the jack-boots, cuirasses, and leather breeches of the life-guards, the stiff leather stocks of the whole army, that, nine times out of ten, prevent the men from coming correctly to the present when taking aim; the worsted French epaulets, together with the tasteless upright feather worn by some corps, and the still more tasteless apple-dumpling tuft worn by others; as well as to any one who shall contrive to divide equally between the two shoulders the weight of the sixty rounds of ammunition now supported exclusively by the left shoulder. What is called the Highland dress should also be abolished. The kilt is unfit for service, either in cold or warm cli-

mates, and the soldiers themselves dislike it after the novelty is over. The plumed bonnet is, no doubt, a splendid head-dress, but very uncomfortable and fit only for fine parade wear and weather. It is no more Highland than it is Chinese, and should be done away with if only to prevent the soldiers from paying the price of the foolery. Hussars, lancers, and grenadiers get their precious caps as part of their uniform; the Highland soldier gets only the eight-penny blue bonnet to which plumes are affixed, and for these he must pay out of his own pocket, and they generally cost between two and three guineas.

That the military eye has got accustomed to admire the foregoing articles of apparel proves nothing in their favour. Military eyes admired in succession all the contrivances for disfiguring the human form described in this paper, and when common sense, at last, rejected them, after they had inflicted years of torment on the soldier, then, indeed, both military and fashionable eyes wondered how they had ever tolerated such lamentable fooleries; just as we are now astonished at ever having gravely submitted our heads to be covered with grease and hair-powder, and having tortured our limbs in white pipe-clayed breeches and long gaiters. Who ever thought of following the hounds in a hussar cap, or of going out to shoot, oppressed with the load of bear-skin inflicted on the head of the unhappy grenadier? And are Russians and Frenchmen more easily dealt with, in field or cover, than foxes or pheasants; or is a man called upon for more active exertions in the chase than in war? Those know, indeed, little of either who think so.

What mortal ever beheld a jack-tar go up, only to the maintop, in any thing like a *chako* and upright feather, or

reef top-sails in a stiff leather stock? Yet it is easier to ascend the main-shrouds than to scramble over sharp-pointed palisades, to mount scaling-ladders, or climb up ruined masses of well-defended ramparts. Why a soldier's dress should be as much as possible calculated to cramp his exertions on such occasions we leave to the ingenious to discover.

As to any proposals of our own, we can only repeat, what we had formerly occasion to state,—that the pointing out of deficiencies does not entail upon us any necessity of suggesting the remedies; the full perception of error being in itself, the first step towards amendment. But were we in the few words for which we have alone left room, to give our opinion of military costume, we should say, that it ought always to be adapted to the performance of feats of strength and activity, and calculated, as much as possible, to afford shelter and protection against all the chances of wind and weather a soldier is liable to encounter. It should combine, with these advantages, as much splendour and elegance as are consistent with *rational* economy; it should set off and improve the manly figure of the soldier, make him proud of his appearance, and raise him in the estimation of others as well as in his own; for let prim-faced Wisdom say what she will, even the best of us are, more or less, influenced by appearance.

How all this is to be effected we must, for the present, leave to the consideration of others; but may briefly say, in conclusion, that we consider the real Grecian helmet as by far the handsomest and best covering for all classes of soldiers. It can, of course, be made of various forms and materials, lighter than the graceless *chako*, which affords neither warmth nor shade; and far cheaper than the heavy

bear-skin cap. It should not be fashioned like the present mis-shapen helmet of the cavalry, that slopes back close over the head, as if intended for the flat-headed Indians, and offers no shade; but should swell gracefully above the forehead, to the line of which the front of the crest, crowned with high and "threatening horse-hair," should also advance. It ought further to have a full, large peak, both fore and aft, not only to protect the eyes from the sun, but the back of the neck from rain; and to prevent the head from being heated, there should be plenty of space between the soldier's hair and the crest of the helmet, which should admit of being ventilated when worn in warm climates.

The present cavalry helmet has been ill copied from the antique, by those who did not know that the helmets represented on medals and coins, as sloping back in this manner, were intended to draw over the face in action, having always apertures for the sight, and only rested flat on the head at moments when thrown back for air or coolness. They were the invention of a later period, never worn but on the day of battle, and then exclusively by officers of rank and station.

The Austrian light infantry,—Jagers,—wear round hats turned up on one side and ornamented with a full green plume; it forms a rational and becoming head-dress, and might, were the hat shaped into something like what men of fashion termed the Petersham hat, be rendered a million times more elegant than the graceless *chako* with its dumpling tuft. "Round hats for soldiers!" we think we hear the gentlemen of the button-stick exclaim;—but let them look at Callot's round *hatted Soldadoes*, and see what a figure the best of the *chako* wearers would cut

beside the dashing martial figures represented by the great painter, and the contrast would make all except army contractors smile.

Helmets might indeed be constructed with brims that should give them all the advantage of round hats; and though martinets will, no doubt, laugh at the idea of quaker-helmets, there is authority for the suggestion. In the museum at Naples are several old Roman helmets provided, not only with brims, but with very broad brims into the bargain: it is evident that martial men were not always dressed at complete variance with the object of their profession. Nothing would be easier than to fashion a round hat, or helmet, that should be both useful and ornamental;—that should afford some protection from sun and rain, and give the wearer a military and soldier-like appearance; but it is not done, as the present dress is probably thought good enough for the tacticians: and it must be allowed that the taste exhibited in dressing soldiers is fully on a par with the genius displayed in their training.

The coat, however fashioned, should be single-breasted, with one row of buttons (a single-breasted coat with two rows of buttons is simply a contradiction), and should be richly laced. Officers should wear two epaulets, with or without aiguillette, according as rank and circumstances might suggest: the privates all to have the wings formerly worn by flankers; they are far superior to the worsted French epaulets, give a man a square and broad shouldered appearance; and were exceedingly admired by all the women when the British army first landed on the continent, a testimony sufficiently conclusive in their favour. Serjeants should have the plated scales, or crescents worn

by the cavalry, and ought to be relieved from carrying a fusee; there are already bad shots enough in the ranks. They should have silver lace on their cuffs and collars, instead of the vulgar badge worn on the arm; which was always a sign of servitude, and never of military distinction. This we deem raising, in something, the station of non-commissioned officers, and those who recollect the war, will allow that no class of men more fully deserve any reward that can be bestowed upon them. If they must not fall-in with swords drawn, let them have the spontoons formerly carried by officers; or, what looks still better, the light and handy officer's halbert of the seventeenth century. At all events, let them be relieved from pouch, pouch-belt, and fusee.

Instead of the present coatee, we should further like to see the whole army—the light cavalry and the troops stationed in tropical climates peshaps excepted—attired in regimental frock-coats; they should reach half way to the knee, and be made full in the skirts, that might perhaps be so contrived as to hook back; this χιτων of the Greeks and kirtle of the middle ages being, after all, your only real military dress. Trowsers to be worn of course, but instead of the half-boots, the infantry should have shoes and gaiters, as the best boot confines the instep more or less, and though the soldiers themselves prefer the boot, it is owing solely to their general love of dandyism, and to their usual forgetfulness of what they may be called upon to encounter. In tropical climates the turban should be worn; it is not only a light and graceful head dress, but affords, by far, the best protection against the heat of the sun: it would tend to the comfort of all soldiers, serving in these climates, and would save the lives of many. In

India, the military costume of the country should be adopted as much as possible: many of the military dresses of Asia are very beautiful,—all are more comfortable, better suited to the climate, and incomparably better-looking than the stiff military costume of Europe.

The blue undress frock of the infantry officer must be provided with the same scales or crescents worn by the cavalry: the undress cap, with its red, yellow, or green band must, without further delay, be consigned to the flames, as it constitutes with the plain coat and black waist-belt, by far the most depressing and humiliating civil or military dress of modern times. Foreigners, who have heard of the splendid army of England, take our infantry officers, at first sight, not for police officers indeed, but for simple police men.*

The deep study and attention bestowed by so many of our young friends and comrades on the neat or careless elegance of their dress, is a subject of far too great importance to be taken up at the end of an article, but, speaking very generally, we are ready to say, that such attention has our approbation, not only because we hate slovenliness of every kind, and greatly prefer affectation in dress to affectation in manners, but because we willingly encourage all exertion of thought: for habits of reflection once called into action, though bestowed at first on matters of orna-

* Two or three months after this paper was published, scales, or crescents, together with a new and somewhat better description of cap-bands were introduced into the infantry: for this attention to our suggestion, we have to express our acknowledgments. We soon hope to see the frog waist belt consigned to the flames; and trust that a similar fate awaits the black sheep-skin shalracks of the mounted officers; they are fit only to gather in dust and occasion heat. A blue shalrack with gold lace is your only elegant saddle cloth.

ment only, may, in the end, be directed to the useful also, It would appear from Ælian (not the tactician, nor his greater far, the Ælian of the United Service Journal,* but Claudius Ælianus, the writer of histories), that Xenophon himself was a sort of Grecian dandy, for he always wore, in the field, a cuirass of Athenian workmanship, a Theban helmet, and a shield made at Argos: such pieces of armour, from the towns specified, being considered in the ancient world not only as the best, but also the most beautiful of their kind. Who knows, therefore, whether we may not, by thinking about the fashion of a hat, or the handiness of a cane, hit, some day, on the discovery of a good helmet, and on a well-poised and well-tempered sword; articles, as yet, totally unknown in the victorious army of Britain.

* The author had ascribed to Colonel Napier some papers that appeared in the United Service Journal, under that signature.

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS IN THE BRITISH ARMY.

ἄεθλα γὰρ οἷς κεῖται ἀρετῆς μέγιστα, τοῖσδε καὶ ἄνδρος ἄριστοι πολιτεύουσι.

Where the reward of valour is highest, there will the bravest men be found.

THUCYDIDES.

THE military service of Britain, entails upon the private soldier, a life of toil and hardship totally destitute of rewards; and creates, from this faulty constitution, a necessity for the severe punishments, of which so many complaints have been made. Even in profound peace the soldier is severed, during the best years of his life, from home, parents, and friends; from all, in fact, that men hold dear on earth. The thousands of miles that separate him from his native hearths, cut him off from every interchange of affection with those on whom the best and purest affections of man can be placed: and the ten, or twenty years, which he must pass in distant parts of the globe, in the performance of dull, monotonous duties, dry up and deaden the better feelings of the heart, which can only be preserved in primitive softness, by being called into action, even as the limbs of the body are kept elastic by continued exertion. Thus debarred from all attachments, from the interchange of all sympathies, the soldier becomes

a stern and reckless being, isolated in the midst of the crowd by which he is surrounded; the more generous feelings of his nature are, for want of congenial support, thrown back into the recesses of his bosom, too often to prey upon the very heart which, under happier auspices, they might have ennobled and adorned; and no sooner is his manly strength exhausted, than the British service, ungrateful to the last, discards him from its ranks, casts him out a houseless stranger on the world's frozen surface. "Scorned by the young, forgotten by the old;" he has outlived the ties of early life, and is destitute of friends, kindred, or pursuit; a child in experience, bending already beneath the weight of premature age, and with a pittance hardly sufficient to support him in the most abject and distressing poverty, during the few remaining years of his joyless existence.

The people of Britain have often shown sympathy for strangers: expatriated Poles, Spaniards, and Portuguese, have found advocates to excite in their favour the generous benevolence of all classes in the country: the African slaves in our colonies found friends, who in their zeal for Negro emancipation, were ready to sacrifice the rights of property and the pledged faith and honour of the nation. But the soldiers of Britain have found no friends; their just claims to reward have found no advocates: every tongue has been paralyzed, and every voice has been mute, when their cause was to be pleaded. It was forgotten that these soldiers had overshadowed their native land, with the laurels gained in a hundred fights; that they had added valuable and extensive colonies to her dominion, and that the fame of their invincibility, had secured for her the possession of distant empires, acquired by the valour of

their immediate predecessors. It is forgotten that these soldiers, so terrible to the enemy abroad, were the best guardians of peace at home; that the just confidence reposed in their loyalty, discipline, and good conduct, had alone given force to the law, security to property, maintained order and tranquillity, at the moment when the storms raised by contending factions, shook to its very foundation the fabric of the state. History records no instance of higher or nobler conduct on the part of military bands than that pursued by the soldiers of the British army: and if their conduct has been unequalled; unequalled also has been the conduct pursued towards them by the country.

Britain, the great, the free, the wealthy, and the victorious, has evinced her gratitude to the soldiers of the army by diminishing their already insufficient pay, and by curtailing their still more insufficient pensions. The boasted liberality of the age, has been metamorphosed into selfishness when tried by the conduct adopted towards the army; and the noble philanthropy, claimed by all parties as the characteristic of their sects, has, when tried by the same criterion, proved to be a mere flower of rhetoric, congealed into barrenness at the first glance of the political economists, who so liberally toil to preserve the wealth of the rich, at the expense of the poor. But if no advocates were found to plead for rewards to good soldiers, plenty were ready to obtain immunity for the worthless at the mere expense of discipline and subordination: and thousands without ever looking beneath the surface, or investigating the causes that rendered stern and severe punishments necessary in an army, which could offer no reward for good conduct, set up the banner of agitation, and demanded with loud shouts the abolition of corporal punishment.

Like most military men, I have, of course, been anxious to see this practice done away. And, leaving for the present, all sentiments of ordinary humanity out of the question, though they are no more excluded from the breast by a red coat than by a brown one, we may safely say, that honest ambition must make officers desirous of seeing the soldiers so far raised in station and character as to render all appeals to the lash unnecessary; because the higher the subordinate stands in society, and in public estimation, the higher must the commander stand also.

On the other hand, we know from history, as well as from every day's experience, that an army without discipline is nothing better than an armed mob,—far more dangerous to its friends than to its foes. And we do not yet know how an army, composed, recruited, ill paid, and ill rewarded, as the British army now is, can be maintained in a perfect state of discipline, unless with the aid of a prompt, efficient, and terror-striking mode of punishment,—capable of checking crime and keeping the evil-disposed in awe. This is, no doubt, a great misfortune,—rendered doubly so, indeed, from the system of punishment resorted to in the army being made a subject of agitation by those who are fully determined not to adopt the only just and practicable mode of removing the evil. And what, we shall be asked, is the mode by which this evil can be removed? There is but one mode of doing so, and that is, by raising the condition of the soldier. But in an age which values money alone, we can only effect this by augmenting the pay, comforts, and prospects of the troops.*

* This article appeared originally in the United Service Journal for April, 1835, at the time when a commission was about to assemble for the purpose of inquiring into the practicability of abolishing cor-

I well know the horror with which such a proposition will be received; but justice, policy, humanity, and economy itself, call loudly for the measure. Justice demands that the toils, dangers, trials and privations, as well as the heart and soul depressing tedium to which a soldier's life is constantly exposed, should be better rewarded. Policy calls for the maintenance of a strong, loyal, and efficient army,—never since the world began more wanted than at this moment in this very country; and economy demands, that men only from whom the greatest exertions can be expected, should be permitted to enter its ranks. the reader who recollects the Peninsular war, will remember the great number of sick, feeble, useless, and exhausted men, constantly away from their regiments—far more a burthen, and reproach, than a benefit to the service. He will also recollect the numbers who in the hour of battle were hardly able to lift an ill-loaded musket to their shoulder, the fire of which, though it might sometimes hurt a friend, never injured an enemy. From abler men, better armed and equipped, more efficient exertions may be expected,—the

poral punishment. And the writer believes that he was the first, in this and in earlier papers, publicly to recommend that the condition of the soldier should be improved, not merely on the score of duty and humanity, but on the score of economy also. The principle has since been taken up by others; and in the year 1837, the words "reward for good conduct" have passed the lips of a British Secretary-at-War, and been heard within the walls of a British senate. Though nothing has yet been done to carry the principle into effect,—for no one will lay any stress on the late warrants,—the acknowledgment of its justness is a great point gained: particularly so, when we recollect that not long ago, it was considered very liberal, even for military men, to declare that soldiers were too well paid and provided for. It is dreadful to reflect on the misery and suffering occasioned by the numerous military delusions under which we have laboured in this country: delusions which so many still strive to uphold from motives which, in charity, we shall only call erroneous.

few may be made to do the duty of the many; and, in case of war, one year's proper outlay of money would save the country from ten years of useless and extravagant expenditure.

At present, an old age of poverty, neglect, and suffering, —subject, besides, to as much insult as liberal ingenuity can heap upon the poor, the infirm, and deserving, is all that a soldier has to look forward to after years of honourable exertion. And as there is no encouragement, or next to no encouragement, for good conduct in the army, how can we possibly abolish the punishment necessary for repressing bad conduct?

But, say modern philanthropists, it is not necessary and salutary punishment that we wish to abolish, it is only flogging that we wish to do away with; because that particular mode of punishment is revolting to humanity, and degrading to the criminal on whom it is inflicted. For my own part, I look upon all severe punishment as revolting to humanity; but cannot comprehend the new system of ethics, according to which, disgrace is inflicted by the punishment of crime, instead of being incurred by its commission.

A man who recklessly abandons himself to guilt, on whom remonstrance makes no impression, and in whose breast all sense of shame and all feeling of honour are extinct, is already as much disgraced as he possibly can be by the infliction of any punishment whatever. But he may be reclaimed by the infliction of deserved punishment, and may again become a respectable member of his calling or profession. It is known of many eminent men, that they were only brought to reflection by the severe punishments they received in early life. Some of these would, most

likely, have been entirely ruined had they not been thus sternly recalled to the paths of virtue; and all must, of course, have been lost, if their punishment had entailed upon them disgrace for life. Let us no longer connect the idea of endless degradation with corporal punishment, and the belief in their connexion will necessarily vanish of itself.

The Spartans, the freest people in the world, scourged their young men in order to accustom them to support bodily pain. The Romans, by the Portian law, abolished the infliction of stripes as far as the citizens were concerned, but allowed the punishment to remain in the army, which was so highly honoured and upheld. The conquerors of the world were subjected to the lash, which, as all historical readers know, was at times inflicted with dreadful severity on the soldiers. But the Prætorian bands, the sellers of an empire, on which their insubordination and cowardice entailed disgrace and ruin, were as independent of control, and as free from punishment as the most liberal philanthropists could possibly wish. Yet, which rank noblest in the estimation of posterity—the victorious legions of Scipio, or the Prætorian banditti who murdered Pertinax, and crowned Julianus, the highest bidder for the empire?

Perhaps we shall be told that these examples, taken from ancient history, are no longer applicable to modern times. Civilization, it will be said, was then comparatively in its infancy,—sentiments of honour were not so generally diffused,—and mankind were not so fully awake to a sense of their own dignity. Pretty phrases, no doubt, if not very convincing!

Look at your police reports,—look at the returns of crime,—and then ask yourself, seriously, whether any age, making the slightest pretensions to civilization, ever pro-

duced a greater number of criminals and offenders. Are there no thieves, drunkards, idlers, rioters, and mutineers in these enlightened and delectable times? And if there are, what is to prevent a just proportion of such worthies from being found in every battalion containing seven or eight hundred men, all in the full vigour of life and passion? "Let them be turned out," will be the cry; "let such characters be expelled from the ranks the moment their evil propensities are discovered." And this is the very conclusion at which I wish to arrive. Raise the condition of the soldier, so as to make expulsion from the ranks a punishment; and all corporal punishment may be dispensed with to-morrow. But in an army that holds out no reward to good men, you must take the best men you can get; and most of us will recollect instances of soldiers behaving in the most gallant manner before the enemy, who had been long known as bad subjects, and been punished for serious offences. How in the hour of need are such men to be dispensed with, considering that you can hardly keep your ranks effective as it is? What is the opinion entertained of the military profession, by the class of society to which the soldiers generally belong, may be judged of from the following circumstance, stated in the United Service Gazette of the 12th November last:—

EXTRAORDINARY METHOD OF PREVENTING ENLISTMENT IN THE ARMY.—A dissolute son of a widow at Long Ashton, some time since, enlisted as a soldier, to the great grief of his parent, who, with much difficulty, succeeded in obtaining his release. He has since frequently threatened to take the same step, with the view of obtaining from his mother any object that he desired. On Monday he came home intoxicated, and his mother, believing that

he intended to carry his threat into execution, had recourse to the following extraordinary expedient for its prevention: —With the assistance of her daughter, while her son was asleep, she bandaged his wrist to prevent hemorrhage, and the daughter having placed the fore finger of his right hand on a block, the mother actually chopped it off with a hatchet, a little beyond the first joint. He is now attended by a surgeon, and it is expected that it will be necessary to amputate the remainder of the finger."

Besides, were you now to make expulsion from the army a punishment, men would be constantly committing crimes, simply with a view to change their condition, for the mere love of change; others to escape from restraint, as well as from the trying tedium of the service. In time of war, some might probably do the same, in order to shun the dangers of the field. The cravens would, after all, perhaps, prove the smallest number; for though the terrific hardships of a single active campaign far outweigh those which an entire life of peace can present, there is a soul-stirring excitement about war that calls forth all the energies in the human breast: it awakens that wild sense of honour which soldiers term manliness, and which, when aroused, rallies them bravely round their colours, impels them forward, even as if danger for itself they loved. Who, in the most miserable and cheerless bivouac, has not occasionally speculated on the time when chance or fortune should furnish him with an opportunity of defeating, by his single arm, entire hosts of foes, and should thus enable him to reap laurels and rewards far surpassing those ever yet bestowed by grateful and admiring nations, on the most successful warriors?

But these brilliant dreams and pleasant fooleries, (for

pleasant and useful they are, however foolish they may ultimately prove,) entirely vanish the moment when peace has lulled the excitement, and reflection cooled the overheated imagination. In the tedious sameness of garrison life, the soldier, freed by his situation from the necessity of toiling for his daily bread, is left at the full liberty to reflect on the barren waste and dreary prospect before him. He finds himself condemned to pass the best years of manhood in sickly and unhealthy climates, perhaps; in standing sentry over ordnance stores, under the burning sun of the tropics; or in changing from one dull quarter to another in the frozen regions of Canada. The moment the first intoxication of wearing a fine coat and leading an idle life is at an end, fancy pictures to him the blessings of independence in a thousand splendid and exaggerated colours. He constantly sees men, not always his superiors in merit or talent, making their way to ease and affluence: he overlooks the far greater number that fail, and fall victims to crime or misfortune. He has entered the army at too early an age to know the world's coldness and treachery: blind to the advantages he possesses, he repines over his bonds, and blames the service which precludes him from sharing in the happiness of which he dreams: he is a moral prisoner, deprived by the iron rules of discipline, from entering the garden of Eden that imagination has placed within his view. It is heart-rending enough to see the good, the generous, and the brave struck down, in the field, by the cowardly and despicable arms of the moderns, or disabled for life, while yet in the prime of youth and strength. But these things are seen only at times, when the mind is wrought up to a state of excitement that enables us to witness scenes and actions which, under all other circum-

stances but those of war and battle, would overcome even the sternest nature. And all officers who have served in distant, and particularly in tropical colonies, must know how much more painful and afflicting it is to listen to the vain and fruitless applications of good and deserving soldiers, soliciting useless intercession, in order to obtain their release from the service. These applications, though founded often enough on tales of ruined hopes and early follies, bear frequent evidence of that heart-crushing despondency so natural to men who find themselves absolutely fixed and stationary for life; unable to employ with advantage those powers and talents, sometimes imaginary, but sometimes great, with which Nature has endowed them,—who see that hope, which comes to all, comes not to them. No; whatever were their prospects, whatever are their feelings, whatever are their minds or talents, at the relentless call of duty, they stand sentry before the magazine one day, and mount guard on the platform another, without a prospect of change or release, till the mind has settled into one undeviating train of barren thought, and till the best of bodily strength is completely exhausted. Schiller says truly of this monotonous part of the service—

> "Des Dienstes immer gleich gestellte Uhr,
> Die waffenübung, das Commandowort,
> Dem Herzen giebt es nichts, dem lechsenden,
> Die Seele fehlt dem nichtigen Geschaft."*

A good deal was said before the Committee, which last year examined into this subject, about granting commissions to deserving soldiers in order to induce a better description of men to enter the army. As far as the present writer's experience goes, he would say that promoted soldiers seldom

* Wallenstein's Lager.

make good officers, and are seldom popular with the men. There are exceptions, no doubt, and very splendid exceptions too, but they are few in number; there are, besides, thousands of deserving soldiers totally unfit to hold commissions. But what is more to the purpose here, is the fact, that a better description of men than the generality of those composing the British army, cannot possibly be found were the world's surface searched for them. If recruiting parties had more choice, more athletic men only would be enlisted; but in point of disposition, better men are not to be obtained. The fact is singular and striking, and must give all those who are acquainted with British soldiers, a high opinion of the worth and excellence of the people from among whom they are taken. Any thing may be made of such men; but the ungrateful nature of the service tends only to crush their best and most valuable qualities. While in the service their pay barely leaves them enough, after their messing and other expenses are paid, to indulge in low dissipation, generally intoxication, destructive alike to soul and body: the money they receive is too little to be turned to any useful or creditable account: the prospect of doing good by saving is too distant to act upon the young and the sanguine, particularly in a profession, the very tendency of which is to make men careless: military legislators should, like tacticians, know something of human nature.

That soldiers occasionally save a little money is true, and when they do so, they generally employ it in a very creditable manner, by sending it home to friends or parents; but, unless these sums are gained by working at trades, or by attending on officers, they can only be collected by a degree of skill, self-denial, and perseverance, that should

entitle the economists to the highest financial honours in the State. Enlightened economy commands that the soldiers' pay should be greatly raised; for though its present amount may exceed what a labourer sometimes gains, it must be recollected that the labourer's wages rise with the market, and that his condition may improve; whereas the soldier is stationary for all the years that can be termed life. The nominal bounty,—for it is nothing better,—which buys the soldier's labour for the service of the country, buys it not for a week or a month, as a labourer hires himself out,—it buys up the labour as well as the hopes of an entire life: it buys them at a price injurious to the best interest of the nation, and unworthy of a great people.

And is it to be wondered at, that men so situated, with all their powers and capabilities about them, should at times become reckless, and even desperate, and fly into every kind of excess and dissipation that chance may place within their reach; considering also that instigators to mischief and profligacy are never wanting in any corps, garrison, or quarters? How, under such circumstances, when good conduct leads to nothing, and when no reward is held out to exemplary behaviour, is discipline to be upheld, unless by the aid of a prompt and terror-striking method of punishment? Every farthing taken from the soldier's pension, every fraction taken from his pay, lessens the inducement to good conduct, and renders the melancholy alternative of punishment only more indispensable. And every penny saved to the country, at the expense of the soldier, by the noble exertions of economists, has been paid for over and over again, in bloody stripes inflicted, from the sad necessity of counteracting the mischievous doings of these unhappy legislators.

But flogging, it will be said, is abolished in most of the Continental armies; why, then, should we alone retain this barbarous and revolting punishment? Two very good and simple reasons render a prompt and efficient method of punishment, whatever that punishment may be, far more indispensable in the British army than in most Continental armies; and those reasons, which the philanthropists ought at least to have known, are,—a difference of national character, and the CONSCRIPTION. On the continent, all able-bodied men are bound to serve as soldiers the moment they are called upon. The conscription exists, with various modifications, from one end of Europe to the other. The armies are always kept complete; recruits are at hand to fill the vacancies that occur by casualties, as well as by the punishments, which are generally of a very severe kind. And modern philosophy alone can prove that the chains and the galleys of France, where the lash is laid on with an unsparing hand, or the Russian *knout*, under the infliction of which so many criminals actually expire, are less degrading than the "cat-o'-nine-tails," never used in the British army, except by the sentence of a court-martial, which is never carried into effect unless under the inspection of a medical officer.

Besides, the people of these islands differ far more in character from the various nations of the continent than those nations differ from each other. We are a nation of restless, energetic, and enterprising people; gifted with strong passions and great powers. But like all men so gifted, our powers are as fierce in evil as they are great in good. We are a people impatient of control, constantly striving to rise, and destitute of that sort of apathy, by which all other nations are comparatively distinguished.

To say nothing of the great things we have done in arts, arms, and in all the higher pursuits that tend to ennoble mankind; the mere sight of our country, when contrasted with others, proves this past dispute. Look even at France beyond the gates of Paris, and compare the stagnation that seems to reign over the entire land, with the continual bustle, active energy, and constant improvement witnessed in every part of Britain, from Scilly to John-o'-Groats; it is comparing the stagnation of the Dead Sea to the mountain torrent, resistless in its fertilizing, as well as in its destroying course. We approximate in character nearest to our good forefathers, the Germans and Danes. The people of both these countries are, at least, as enlightened as the British; but a single glance at the surface of our respective countries shows at once how immeasurably they are behind us in other respects. On the other hand, the criminals of both those countries put together, (and their joint population nearly doubles ours,) would never have peopled two hemispheres, (with whites at least)—raised up, we might almost say, a mighty empire in the West, and laid the foundations of another in the East. If, then, we differ from foreign nations in character, why should our system of discipline, which must be adapted to national character, be tried by their system and practice? Besides the conscription, which so materially helps to keep up the discipline of foreign armies, it may truly be said that those armies are, when compared to the British, little better than militia corps, having hardly any colonial services to perform, and being seldom called upon, except in time of war, to leave their own countries.

But were we to adopt a foreign system of discipline, would the people of Britain be content to see British troops

behave as foreign troops have too often done? Many travellers who have passed through countries formerly occupied by British soldiers, must have heard the people confess that the happiest and pleasantest times which they had ever known were those of the British occupation. In the south of France, the peasantry even looked to the British for protection against their own countrymen; and of what other troops can so much be said? Some trifling military duty occasioned the writer of these remarks to be sent into one of the eastern provinces of France, soon after the capture of Paris, in 1815. The events of the campaign of 1814, of which the country he traversed had been the scene, formed everywhere the subject of conversation; and it was impossible to pass through a single village or hamlet without being shocked by the recital of cruelties and excesses of which the Russian troops were said to have been guilty. These accounts may have been exaggerated; but that they were not altogether destitute of foundation is sufficiently proved by the fact, that, in the very depth of a severe winter, the peasantry fled from their hearths, their homes, and their property, to seek shelter from insult and injury, in the recesses of woods and forests.

What has too often been the conduct of French troops may be learned from "Segur's History of the Campaign of 1812." A Frenchman is, of course, the most impartial evidence on such a subject; and the writer here named relieves us from the necessity of again calling to light the horrors committed by Massena's army in Portugal. Those among us who were present in that frightful campaign, would willingly doubt the accuracy of their own recollection; for the conviction that atrocities so monstrous, unheard of, and incredible, were perpetrated almost within our own sight and

presence, nearly tends to make us doubt the divine truth, which commands us to believe that man was made in the image of his benignant and all-merciful Creator.

Nor can I admit the efficiency of a system of discipline that acts not in adversity as well as in prosperity; and this the French system never did; for, in the retreat from Moscow, entire regiments and divisions threw away their arms and accoutrements, and joined the countless bands of fugitive plunderers, who were hurrying, in dishonourable confusion, along the road. But this, we shall be told, was an extreme case. It was so; and a just system of discipline must be calculated to meet extreme cases; for, of one kind or another, they are of constant occurrence in military life. Such a system must be so calculated as to control men under all the trials resulting, as before stated, from the soul-depressing tedium, and consequent temptations of garrison and colonial duty. It must also control them in war, which, though it chastens the heart of the good, hardens the heart of the bad and depraved, in a frightful manner. It must insure instant and unhesitating obedience, be the time or clime what it may—in wet, cold, want, and hunger; in protracted toil as well as under long-continued and exhausting fatigue. Such a system must command the very will of the soldier in situations when life and death are on the cast of every die; in situations of which no man who has not been placed in them can possibly form a judgment. It will not, I suspect, be hazarding too much to assert, that no one can ever acquire a very correct estimate of human character, unless he has seen men under fire! The first flashes of war's stern lightning make every mask vanish; and the first shower of iron hail has scarcely swept past, before every heart is laid bare in all its greatness or

littleness: men who would legislate for soldiers should know these things.

Rewards and punishments constitute, under whatever names they may go, the only lever which, in these times, can sway the mass of an army, or of any other large body of men taken from the same class of society. There are, no doubt, many splendid exceptions, but I am speaking of the mass only; of a mass constantly liable to be placed in situations already described. And to suppose that we can infuse into such a body sentiments of honour strong enough to admit of all hands being moved by the force of that sentiment alone, in the manner in which an army must be moved, is, in my humble opinion, totally out of the question so long as the golden age shall not have arrived. If, therefore, you wish to have an efficient army, you must either pay and reward the soldier in a manner that shall insure a constant supply of good and well-behaved men; or, if modern liberality will not permit you to make such a sacrifice to justice and humanity, you must retain some method of punishment, capable of overawing the bad and indifferent men who, generally for want of any more promising occupation, enter your ill-paid and ill-rewarded service.

Solitary confinement has failed even in time of peace, and would be totally inapplicable in time of war. It would not only keep offenders a long time away from their corps, but also keep away a number of good men required to guard the culprits. The daring would often set the punishment altogether at defiance, well knowing that, in the hour of need, they would not be sent away for trifles; and cravens, who, when present, would go on with the rest, might at times take the benefit of the gaol in order to shelter themselves from danger.

Am I then, it will be asked, an advocate for corporal punishment? Certainly not: for I well know how much the power of inflicting it has been abused, though that time is happily past. But I am an advocate for upholding the discipline of the army; and I candidly confess I do not see how, in the present absence of all rewards for good conduct, an efficient and terror-striking system of punishment, capable of repressing bad conduct, can possibly be dispensed with. Of what kind that punishment should be I pretend not to know. Corporal punishments make the most impression, are soonest got over, and occasion the least loss to the service. That the power of inflicting them has been abused proves in itself nothing; for what power is there granted even for the best of purposes which men have not abused? Let the power of abusing these fierce punishments be altogether guarded against by a proper selection of officers for the command of regiments, the most difficult and important commands in the army. Raise the standard of merit, according to which military rank shall be given, as high as you please, and the higher perhaps the better. But until you are prepared to improve the condition and prospects of the soldier, let us hear no more ignorant lamentations uttered over punishments justly inflicted on the worthless and profligate; uttered, too, by the very men who have so constantly exerted themselves to lower the character of the army, and to prevent the good and deserving soldier from being duly paid, honoured, and rewarded.

Make a great and immediate addition to the pay and pensions of the privates and non-commissioned officers; hold out prospects of honourable employment to them after their discharge, and let them not rank behind the cooks, buttlers, valets, and other attendants of all who are suffi-

ciently wealthy and influential to provide for their lackeys by means of Parliamentary votes. The servants and defenders of the state have surely greater claims to national gratitude than the servants of individuals; and yet, where we see one old soldier in an official situation, we see a hundred discharged menials. When all this is effected, we shall be able to abolish punishments and reduce numbers also; for it will be the first step towards enabling the few to perform the duty of the many.

As some of the Liberal Journals are in the habit of moulding their occasional *tirades* against the army, on the language frequently addressed by drunken rustics to soldiers with whom they are quarrelling, it may be as well here, to show the just value of a phrase, so often and appropriately used by the enlightened parties. "We pay you," says the reeling boor to his martial adversary,—his brother or cousin perhaps,—adding, at the same time, as many terms of low insult as he may still be capable of uttering. "The people pay the army," say the gentlemen of the Liberal press when urging on any measure of mean and ignoble parsimony at the expense of the troops. We must, in charity suppose that the writers of such phrases are misled by their ignorance, for it would be illiberal to accuse them of intending to impose on the ignorance of others.

No party, or set of individuals, can assert that they pay any of those who contribute, by their exertions, to the general stock of wealth, or productiveness of the country. That some may be over-paid and some under-paid, is a matter for legislative consideration; but cannot possibly affect the principle,—that all who contribute by their labours to the general state of wealth, are entitled to a fair proportion of that wealth. The army, who, by their

exertions keep all the parts of the body-politic together, and in their proper places, and under the protection of which the productive labour of the country can alone be carried on, receive far less, in proportion, for the dangerous and difficult task that falls to their share, than any other class of the community. If the men were not soldiers they would still, in some other capacity, receive a share of the general produce of the country; they could not well be put to death as altogether superfluous. "They would work," says the simple economist:—the thousands who are constantly emigrating to America would also work,—if they could find employment. Security for persons and property, constitutes the first foundation of national wealth and prosperity; and this can now, in the Iron age, be solely obtained under the shade of arms. When the Golden age arrives, things will be different; but till then, we cannot say that the people pay the army. As well might the cabbage in the Dutchman's garden boast of its magnanimity in paying the dyke which protects it from the fury of the ocean; for without the dyke, which here represents the army, the very soil from whence the cabbage derives its full-blown honours, pride, and nourishment, would be swept away by the first spring-tide.

ON MILITARY PROMOTION BY PURCHASE.

Il remarque surtout ces conseillers sinistres,
Qui des mœurs et des loix avares corrupteurs,
De Themis et de Mars ont vendu les Honneurs;
Qui mirent, les premiers à d'indignes enchères,
L'inestimable prix des virtues de nos pères.

VOLTAIRE.

MEN are not merely the children of habit, they seem in many respects its slaves also: for they not only submit their actions, but their very thoughts to its absolute guidance. What but the habit of seeing military rank and command sold for money, could reconcile an entire people, claiming a foremost station among the civilized nations of the earth, to a practice which gives to the mere holder of wealth, almost boundless control over the fortunes of his subordinates? Or what, but the habitual submission of thought to existing practices could ever call up advocates to the defence of such a system? Economy has formed the strong ground on which the defenders of purchase hav taken their general stand; other advantages supposed to result from the practice, have also been brought forward; but it has derived its principal, if not avowed support, from the belief, entertained in various quarters, that it

tends to render the army more aristocratic. We shall, as the task is an easy one, expose these errors, and then leave the reader to judge for himself of the value of a system, which makes gold the criterion of military merit. And first, as in duty bound, of economy, the monster idol of the day; an idol, the blind worship of which has entailed on its followers so fearful a loss of blood and treasures.

Before we enter on the inquiry, it must be fairly understood, that the army is raised and kept up for the benefit of the country. The comforts and advantages of the army, and even the army itself, must if necessary, be sacrificed to the good of the country: the country can in no case be sacrificed or injured for the good of the army. But, self-evident as this proposition is, the interests of the country and of the army are so closely allied, that any undue attempt to cramp the efficiency of the latter recoils, and may recoil with tremendous reaction, against the safety and prosperity of the former. The extent of sacrifices that a nation has to make in order to support an army must, of course, depend upon circumstances. Nations that have much to lose, whose wealth and prosperity have excited the envy of mighty neighbours, and who are, from the extent of their dominions, liable to be attacked in every quarter of the globe, are necessarily called upon to make great sacrifices for the support of a defensive force: the people of Iceland would, if independent, require comparatively a small army.

This point being fairly admitted on one side, there is another, and a very important one, which the other party must establish before they attempt to defend the present system on the grounds of economy; and that is the relative value of blood and gold. How many men may be risked

in order that an ensign's half-pay may be saved? How many may be sacrificed in order that a lieutenant-colonel's pension may be gained? Did Colonel Mullins, for instance purchase his commission? If so, on which side of the account did the balance ultimately fall? The country gained a few pounds and lost 2000 men, to say nothing of honour and renown, by the bargain. Was it a good or a bad bargain, and did the sterling pounds outweigh the sterling bones? All such points must be fairly settled before we can uphold the system of purchase on the ground of economy.

To say nothing at present of the circumstance, that the sale of unattached commissions has entailed upon the public a double corps of officers, and a half-pay list greater than it was on the reduction of the war establishment twenty years ago; let us suppose, for argument's sake, that the system of purchase actually saves to the country a certain sum annually; still must we look at the results which that system produced, and may produce again, before we can place a single one of the splendid farthings, equal almost to Hamilton's wonderful penny, to the clear profit side of the account. Set off against the farthings gained, the blood, fame, and treasures lost, by the failure of the following expeditions—all, as we now know, fully equal to the objects for which they were fitted out: the expeditions to Porto-Rico, Holland, Ferrol, Buenos Ayres, Walcheren, New Orleans, Sacket's Harbour, and Platsburg. Tell us, before a balance is struck, what the three sieges of Badajoz may have cost. They were occasioned, in a great measure, by the unsatisfactory result of the action of Campo-Mayor, which enabled a French division to reach the fortress and aid in its defence. The blame of this was

not altogether thrown on the commander of the southern army, but fell upon individuals of far inferior rank. How much may the battle of Fontes d'Honor have cost? It would not have been fought, had not an error sent the gallant Beckwith, at the head of the light division, across the Coa, apprised Regnier of his danger, and enabled him and the French division under his orders, to effect their escape? How much loss may the French garrison of Almeida have inflicted on the British in the different actions fought, after its invasion, from that half ruined fortress? What may have been the value of the lives, so strangely and unaccountably, sacrificed in the battle of Villa Franca? And how much may have been paid for the unsuccessful cavalry actions fought during the Peninsular War?

We need not suppose that the cause of failure in the actions and enterprises here named rested exclusively with the commanders; in some cases it is known not to have done so. But as it cannot be charged to a want of gallantry on the part of either men or officers; as the elements warred not against us; and, as none of the untoward events, that so often foil even the best concerted military plans, intervened to prevent our success, failure must be charged to a want of conduct, or professional knowledge, on the part of influential individuals: there were men on some particular points, or in some particular stations, who were not equal to the duties demanded of them. The just confidence, which can result from knowledge alone, was wanting somewhere, and without it, little of permanent good can be done in war. The officers to whom these failures must be ascribed, knew not what could or could not be effected by force of arms; they had never been asked for such

knowledge; they had been promoted under a system that makes gold the criterion of merit, and counts professional knowledge for absolutely nothing. In the general course of service an officer of the highest merit without wealth, has no chance whatever against a wealthy officer of the humblest mediocrity. The system of purchase not only promotes the wealthy officer of merit over the heads of his unwealthy and meritorious comrades, a proceeding already sufficiently injurious; it promotes the wealthy dunces of the honourable profession, not merely over the unwealthy dunces of the same profession, for there are such men in all classes, but it carries them in triumph over the heads of the bravest and the best of all who happen not to be rich. This in itself is a great and glaring evil, and one that leads to the most pernicious consequences; for it not only destroys emulation, but tends to arrest the progress of that study, application, and reflection, which can alone develope and bring to perfection the true military character. Those who perceive that professional knowledge and acquirement are useless without money, and needless with money, readily grow indifferent to attainments more likely to become injurious than beneficial. Unless supported by wealth or influence, talents will be left unnoticed; except, perhaps, to call forth a little malicious envy on the part of some vain and ignorant commanding officer. If, at the end of years, chance causes them to be known, or suspected, in higher quarters, authorities must, for the sake of consistency, pass them over, because to bring them forward, after long neglect, would be a reproach on themselves, an acknowledgment that merit had remained unknown and unrewarded. The man of talent is thus, by degrees, looked upon as an obnoxious person, and the very qualities that

should have insured him distinction, become, at last, a bar to all preferment.

It is thus left to chance, and chance alone, to place efficient or inefficient officers in the service. On the occasions of which we have spoken, the inefficient predominated, either from numbers or station. On other occasions the efficient have, fortunately, predominated. As the officers of the British army are taken from the best classes of society and bring with them into the ranks the courage and good sense which, as a body, they inherit from the land of their fathers, it must always give a certain degree of efficiency to every British army, and secure for every class, and every regiment, a proportion of officers of the highest merit: but no effort is made to place the best in the most important situations, or to keep the useless at a distance and beyond the power of doing mischief. An inefficient commander shall injure the spirit and value of an entire corps of officers, while an able commander shall elevate them far above the level of ordinary excellence. One man shall make a very good Lieutenant, and yet be very unfit for a Lieutenant-Colonel; and a pretty fair Lieutenant-Colonel will sometimes make but an indifferent Lieutenant-General. But money will make a very ordinary man Lieutenant-Colonel, and then, if he lives, time will make him a General: so that this pretended system of economy burdens the country with a number of officers of high rank, for whom no employment can be found, even when they are fit for the duties of their rank, which is not always the case. It also makes military rank, which should be emblematical of very high qualities, too cheap and too ordinary a commodity. From the moment that money or interest are allowed to take the lead of merit; from the moment that

promotion ceases to be given according to merit; from that moment the standard of qualification that shall enable an officer to hold military rank and command, is reduced to the level of the humblest mediocrity that can hold its ground in ordinary society. All merit is relative and can only be measured by merit; it cannot, like the height of a recruit, be measured by a regular scale. Candidates might no doubt be examined in French, German, and mathematics, all good things of their kind: but proficiency in these, and in fifty other branches of knowledge, will not decide a question of merit, because, to some men a headful of knowledge is only so much dead weight, while others can make a moderate degree of information go a great way. It is mind that is wanted, and this cannot be measured by mere rule; nor can a man of mind and capacity be passed over by wealthy mediocrity, without a palpable injustice to the service and the country: and yet we see it done every day.

Some will perhaps, lay stress on the recommendations and certificates of qualification, that every officer must produce before he can be appointed or promoted. We have all seen too many unfit men in every rank of the army to lay stress on these illusory safeguards. Provided an officer dresses according to the regulation, keeps his footing in ordinary society, can perform the manual and platoon exercise, put a battalion mechanically through the field movements,—branches of knowledge equal to a hundredth part of what a young midshipman must know before he can work his first day's reckoning,—no lieutenant-colonel can, we suspect, refuse him an ordinary recommendation. If a candidate for purchase, equals the lowest and least meritorious officer before promoted by purchase, he is evidently, if there are no strong and direct grounds against

him, entitled to a recommendation; just as a recruit is passed when he comes up to the lowest standard: and with lieutenant-colonels promoted to their responsible situation by chance, purchase or patronage, we do not see how it can be otherwise. That it should be otherwise we know from pretty good authority if the testimony of Alexander is allowed to be received: "no situation can be so trifling," said the world's great victor, "as not to require wisdom and virtue in the performance of its duties." But wisdom and virtue are not necessary to obtain promotion by purchase; the absence of active vices and absolute incapacity is all that is required from the candidates; and men may be very, very far from possessing wisdom and virtue, though neither grossly vicious, nor absolutely idiotical.

This matter of recommendation deserves, however, a word here, because it is, at the best attended with some difficulty. It must be painful for an applicant to solicit a recommendation; and the request must be equally painful to the person to whom it is addressed; unless he can grant it to the fullest extent. But there are many deserving individuals in the army not exactly suited to the profession; hardly capable of doing justice to the rank they hold, and still less fitted for a higher station. In what manner are such men to be recommended? The most upright men also rise occasionally to power and command, without possessing that knowledge of human character which constitutes by far the most essential of all military qualities; such persons are, of course, no very eminent judges of merit; they will, at times, mistake humble and unobtrusive talent for weakness; and forward impudence for genius; at others, they will see nothing but impertinent presumption, in manly and independent bearing, and find

merit only in the bowing courtier or fawning sycophant. This is independent even of the favour, partialities, and affections, as well as of the little jealousies and darker feelings that so constantly adhere to that "sad Acheron of sorrow" the human heart, and but too often tend to obscure the judgment of the bravest and the best.

From ordinary men an ordinary recommendation may at least pass unobserved; but when a man, possessing great influence, more from the station to which his talents have raised him in public estimation, than from mere professional rank, undertakes to recommend a subordinate officer, he is, in honour, bound to use his utmost exertions to render it effectual; because a cold or common-place recommendation from an individual who is known, or believed to be capable of forming an accurate opinion, is far more injurious than advantageous; it "damns with faint praise."

The country is just now paying 15,000*l.* annually in retired allowances to three Lord Chancellors; it is no doubt paying also large sums of the same kind to retired Judges and other high legal functionaries. Now all these retired allowances might have been saved to the public, provided the retired parties had been allowed to sell their chancellorships and other legal situations, to good plain honest persons well provided with cash and patience. And as there would not, in the first instance, have been any unattached judges and chancellors, there must evidently have been a clear and distinct saving to the country. And, yet, where is the man who, in his sane and sober senses, would propose or defend such a measure for the purpose of such a saving? What, intrust the lives, safety, and property of individuals to the decision of judges merely because they were wealthy enough to purchase their appointment? The

very idea, we should be told, is monstrous and unheard of. And true enough, it would be so. Why then intrust the lives and happiness of soldiers, not by ones and twos, as the lives and fortunes of individuals are intrusted to judges, but by thousands, to officers, merely because they are wealthy enough to purchase their rank and power?

We shall no doubt be told, that judges and chancellors require to be learned in the law, and shall also be reminded perhaps, of the well-known saying, which destines the dunces, *par excellence*, of every family, to the mere head-breaking profession of arms. To the necessity of learning on the part of the clergymen and lawyers I am willing to subscribe, and I have a pleasure in adding my conviction that no time, nation, or profession, ever produced so many men of high character, talent, learning, and integrity, as the British bar, and the established churches of Britain. Evil times have undeservedly come over the latter; but the noble character which the former have maintained constitutes one of the best pillars on which rests the internal peace and safety of the country. That any dunce is fit for the army is a saying that has been so often repeated, as to have become almost a fixed axiom; and dearly has the country paid for believing the absurdity.

The administration of justice is the calm application of established rules, requiring learning, honour, dignity, and impartiality. War, on the other hand, is continued action, requiring the constant exertion of all the best mental and bodily faculties of which men are capable. Exertions not directed against passive resistance, but against constant reaction. A reaction that comes not in the shape of armed foes alone, but in a thousand different shapes. It comes in the shape of cold, heat, frost, rain, want, rivers, roads,

breakages, accidents, miscalculations, misunderstandings: it comes in the shape of all the perverseness, as well as of all the feebleness of body and character to which men are liable; the mere overturning of a cart may, by blocking up a pass or road, impede a movement and cause the loss of valuable lives. Let it not be thought that Generals and Commanders of armies are alone oppressed by such untoward circumstances,—far from it: they press upon the leader of every division and subdivision of an army, and every picquet and detachment is as much exposed to them as to the shot of the enemy. And the less a commander, be he Ensign or Field-Marshal, can overcome the difficulties by conduct and judgment, the more must the soldiers suffer in order to atone for the deficiency.

To act with energy under the sort of difficulties here stated, a man must possess extensive general knowledge; above all, a knowledge of human character; and he must be able to draw just and quick conclusions from that knowledge, in order to make it available in the hour of trial. When Sir Hussey Vivian charged the French cavalry at Waterloo, before he attacked the infantry, he bore in mind, as he has himself told us, the loss which the French cavalry inflicted on the Austrian infantry at Marengo, under nearly similar circumstances; and he therefore determined to put the cavalry *hors de combat* first, and to deal with the infantry afterwards. A man of Sir Hussey's talents would, probably, have acted as he did, without having these events in his mind; but the mere recollection could hardly fail to bring him to such a resolution, and shows the great benefit that may be derived from knowledge.

Ambassadors, the givers of balls, the presenters, at foreign

courts, of travelling dandies, the occasional bearers of diplomatic notes,—men, in fact, on whom nothing of the slightest importance devolves, in these rail-road, steam-boat and statistical days, never sell their situations to secretaries of legation for the benefit of the public; though every ambassador receives an allowance equal to what is received by about fifteen captains, possibly of long and eventful service. Clerks and subordinates in the different public offices, who are only required to write a clear hand, and to understand, perhaps, the ordinary rules of arithmetic, on whom no responsibility can possibly devolve, never sell their appointments for the sake of public economy.

Military men only, on whom the happiness of thousands must depend in time of peace; who in the course of their professional duties may be called upon, and are called upon, to act as judges, jailors, governors, and magistrates, and to whom in time of war, the lives of thousands are intrusted,—these men only are allowed to sell the rank that gives such fearful power, and in which such high and appalling responsibility is constantly made to rest. In such a profession merit alone can give a right to promotion. Even length of service should only give a claim, where the merit of candidates are, in other respects, equal, for there are men who may be for years in the army, and go through entire campaigns, without ever acquiring a single clear professional idea: they may be good and brave men, and yet want the power of mind that can alone render their goodness and bravery available. As in all professions, there may be in the army worthless and incapable persons endowed with sufficient cunning to escape dismissal, and yet occasion great suffering to others: there may also be selfish men in the ranks, always ready to sacrifice subor-

dinates, and the service itself, to their own interested views. Such men may have money and length of service; but they should never obtain promotion, which can only be given, at the expense of the soldiers and of the country. Meritorious service is entitled to reward and distinction; but it is only the power of rendering meritorious and efficient service that can give the slightest claim to military rank and preferment.

I must here beg the gentlemen who have acquired rank by purchase to recollect, that I am arraigning a system of promotion, and not the individuals who have availed themselves of that system. All men of honest ambition, must strive to rise as high as possible in their professions. No man of manly feelings can see himself passed over, by purchase or otherwise, without having those feelings severely lacerated; and the present writer purchased promotion like others, to the extent of his means, and would have purchased higher had the means been at his disposal; but such feelings, however natural and laudable to individuals, say nothing in favour of a pernicious system.

But it will, perhaps, be said,—for what is not said in these days?—that the splendid victories gained under the present system are sufficient proofs of its excellence. High sounding assertions of this kind may blind the ignorant, and impose upon the superficial observer who can see only one side of a question; but they will make little impression on minds accustomed to take a full and enlarged view of a subject. We have seen that a number of military enterprises failed in consequence of faulty leading, resulting from the system of promotion now existing in the army. We can trace those failures to no other source, as we know that the elements did not war against us, and that

the means placed at the disposal of the commanders were fully equal to the objects intended to be accomplished. But if we can only account for the failures mentioned by tracing them back to our system of promotion, we can easily account for the success achieved, without sharing with that system a single fragment of laurel. Our success was due to the gallantry of the troops, to the courage and devotedness of the officers, to the intelligence which pervaded all ranks, and which, in the mass, atoned for the loss so often sustained, even in the midst of victory, on particular points, by the mistakes and misconduct of individuals. All this zeal and courage threw ultimately so bright a lustre over the last events of the war, as to cast completely into the shade the recollection of the toil and suffering by which victory had been gained, as well as of the torrents of gallant blood which had so often been wasted, in order to redeem the errors of the rash, the foolish, and the feeble. The sun never shone on a nobler host than the British army which took the field at the commencement of the Peninsular war. Under fair circumstances, such an army could hardly fail of success. Where were the men who stormed St. Sebastian to meet with equal foes on level plain?—but the splendour of our success must not blind us to the price at which it was purchased.

True it is that no system which men can devise, will ever secure us entirely from loss, or from the effects of error; but we are bound, nevertheless, to use our best efforts to master chance, and to secure the lives of our soldiers. Having trained, armed, and officered our troops, in what we honestly believe to be the most efficient manner, we may then at least await the fiery shock of war with a tranquil conscience: we need no longer tremble at the possible

consequences of measures and appointments dictated by gold, interest or party views: we can fairly face the result whatever it may prove; and if fortune decides against us, we may still say with a good conscience that we used every honest endeavour to merit success. At present the country cannot lay this unction to its soul: every drop of blood spilt in the successful actions already mentioned; every gallant life uselessly sacrificed on points where faults and errors were committed in the actions in which ultimate success concealed partial failures, may rise up in judgment against us; for we cannot say that every honest effort was used to place, on every point and in every responsible situation, the ablest and most efficient men the army could have produced. No; the right of commanding was sold for gold, or given according to the power or interest of the candidates, who proved good or bad just as chance directed. That the gallantry of the mass ultimately made us victorious, is no reason for continuing this chance practice, which so often failed us and occasioned so much loss and suffering. Least of all should we uphold such a practice when we have a clear and rational line of duty right before us: a duty that commands us to give military rank and command to officers only of the highest discoverable merit. If the captain of a ship, having an open sea before him, were yet, for some petty interest, to take his course through the midst of rocks and breakers, would his conduct be defensible, because, after endangering the lives of the crew and passengers, good fortune and the gallantry of the sailors, had brought the vessel through with moderate damage and with the loss only of a moderate number of brave men?

That the system of purchase is as well worked and regu-

lated, by the military administration, as such a system can be worked and regulated, is no reason why it should be continued: no very sane people would willingly receive the plague into their country because they had good medical men presiding over well-regulated hospital establishments.

The military authorities have, however, no control over the continuance or discontinuance of the practice, whatever they may think of its merit: in order to put an end to the system, the country would have to furnish the sums required for buying up the purchased commissions, whenever the holders felt disposed to sell them; and this involves a financial arrangement, over which the military authorities have no power. Most ministers are also more disposed to continue the constant payment of small sums, that pass comparatively unnoticed in a budget, than pay out a large sum at once, in order to produce real and lasting benefit: they prefer paying the immortal annuitants, produced by the sale of unattached commissions, to paying out the single holders and drying up at once the source of endless evil. The country thus resembles the members of a certain tribe of philosophic monkeys, mentioned in an Indian fable, who so constantly fall victims to their miscalculating rapacity; and are caught by a few grains of Indian corn, thrown into a narrow necked *cugereé-pot*. The philosopher can squeeze his open hand through the aperture of the treacherous jar; but cannot get it out again when closed round the captured grain, and allows himself to be taken rather than open his hand and forego his prize. Britain has, in like manner, been made to suffer, pretty sharply, for its close handedness, and has inflicted suffering on thousands of its children,

—for, let modern patriots say what they will, soldiers are still the children of the land,—and it is time that the practice of selling command and control over these ill-used children should be discontinued. No very large sum would, it seems, be required to purchase up the commissions, as those of high rank fall in but slowly.

Unprejudiced officers, who served in the Peninsula, and who are capable of forming opinions of their own, tell us how much more might have been done by individuals of very subordinate rank had they then possessed the knowledge which they derived from subsequent experience, and still later reflection. I speak particularly of company officers, captains and subalterns, and feel confident that few saw the importance of the troublesome detail duty which so often fell to their share. There was always a readiness to meet danger certainly; duties of *éclat* were willingly performed; every battalion could, no doubt, have furnished a dozen of leaders for forlorn hopes; but, with all this alacrity to meet the enemy, there was too often a great tardiness to perform less brilliant, though very essential services. The endless train of orderly, fatigue and detachment duties, so important in the field, were mostly looked upon as unworthy the attention of gentlemen who had purchased their rank, and who only waited for opportunities to purchase still higher rank. Can any one look back on the events of that war, and hand on heart, fairly and openly deny that toil, labour, and suffering, were constantly occasioned by the negligent manner in which detail duty was so often slurred over?

Colonel Massenbach, who was Quarter-Master-General to Prince Hohenloe's army during the campaign of 1806,

accuses captains and subalterns, the commanders of patroles and picquets, of having greatly contributed by their negligence and inattention to the overwhelming disasters which befel the Prussian army and monarchy during that short contest. Massenbach's statement, which may be looked upon as official, proves, if proof were wanting, how responsible are the duties liable to devolve upon military men of the humblest rank; and how important it is that only men of the highest discoverable merit should be appointed to, and promoted in so dangerous and difficult a profession.*

All this arose from ignorance of the real importance of detail duties—an ignorance to which those who come after us will be as liable as were their predecessors, and for the same reason. Professional knowledge and reflection on military subjects were neither called forth nor rewarded; nor are they now more highly valued. The American war of Independence surely gave some insight into the nature of bush-fighting and rifle-practice. But the actors in that contest have long passed away; and if the army were to take the field in America to-morrow, they would be as ignorant of that species of warfare as they were in 1776. And why should this be so? Simply in order that promotion may be the reward of wealth instead of being the reward of merit. There was no tendency in the army to collect the scattered facts and causes that led to disaster on one side, or to success on the other; there was no following up of those causes to their dark and hidden springs, so often far removed from the mere surface of events. There

This passage was originally published in November, 1835: since then, the fifth volume of Colonel Napier's History of the Peninsular War has appeared; and the great historian fully confirms the statement here made, even on the authority of the Duke of Wellington himself.

was no reasoning, no philosophising on the subject; no attempt to avert by knowledge a recurrence of evils, and to render success as independent as possible of the caprices of fortune. No—the less that was said about failure the better; and if the gallantry of the troops made us victorious on one occasion, why, it would probably do so again.

Appeals to authority—the usual resource of the feeble, who cannot appeal to arguments—will prove nothing in a case of this sort. We must appeal to principle; and on what principle, human or divine, can reasoning men defend the system of selling military rank—selling for money the right of exercising over men the power and control that officers must necessarily exercise over their soldiers in time of peace, and the still more awful power of leading those soldiers into battle in times of war? Is it credible that such things are, and that they are actually defended? The army has known officers who had attained to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, the highest rank that can be purchased, and who were ultimately forced to leave the service for incapacity or misconduct of some sort or other. But do we know how much unjust suffering, or needless loss, such men occasioned before they were finally dismissed? As there are gradations of demerit as well as of merit, there must occasionally have been men in the service who by good fortune escaped dismissal, and got quietly into higher rank, or out of the army altogether, leaving subordinates to suffer for their misdeeds and inability. A Lieutenant-Colonel already holds absolute sway over six or eight hundred men; inferior officers hold sway in proportion. And yet we see this stern and rigorous power, for such it is and must be, brought to market, sold, bartered, and higgled for like any other commodity! The certificate signed by

officers, declaring that they neither pay nor receive more than the regulated price of the commissions, affects the principle in nothing, and only makes the matter worse; for everybody knows that the regulation is disregarded, and that sums, vastly exceeding the regulated price, are daily paid for commissions, particularly in the higher ranks.

Let us suppose an officer, having purchased his rank, to be arraigned for misconduct in the field, and for having thereby caused the loss of valuable lives; or merely, let us suppose, for having made an entire regiment unhappy by his folly and misconduct: for having driven deserving officers out of the corps, and for having punished deserving soldiers. Might not such a man, on being accused, turn round on the country and say, "I purchased from you the right of commanding these men; you asked me only for money in return for the rank and power which you sold; you required of me neither knowledge, valour, nor wisdom: no, you required only gold, and you got it; and the fruit which you reap is of the seed which you have sown?" Power would, no doubt, bear down such objections, but justice would still be on the side of the defender.

The feeble and partial arguments brought forward to support the present system of promotion may be comprised in a few sentences. It is said, that purchase hastens promotion, that it tends to check mere patronage, which acts so injuriously in the Navy, and that it enables officers to obtain rank while yet in the active years of life; an advantage not to be had without purchase, as the slow promotion in the Artillery is brought forward to prove.

All this is easily answered. Purchase only hastens preferment to the wealthy at the expense of the unwealthy; and when nearly all the commissions that fall vacant are

filled up by purchase, there can be little promotion without it. But let the commissions be purchased up by the country (as commutation allowances are now given to officers of subordinate rank), and let them be cancelled or filled up according to circumstances, and promotion will soon flow in its natural and regular channel. Rapid promotion is, no doubt, flattering and agreeable to those who profit by it, but it is humiliating to those who are passed over: and it should be the object of all military institutions to elevate instead of lowering men in their own estimation. Besides, the army and the country, who must go for something in the matter, profit only by the rapid promotion of able and efficient individuals: the rapid promotion of dunces is the reverse of beneficial.

That purchase checks patronage is altogether an idle assertion. Is there no such thing as giving promotion by purchase from one regiment into another? Is there no such thing as promoting one officer into a West India regiment, and another into a regiment pleasantly situated in England or in the Miditerranean? Who ever heard of a scion of nobility being promoted by purchase to a regiment stationed at Hondaras? Perhaps there is no such thing as promoting by purchase a junior officer from one corps over the heads of the purchasing officers of another? Or do we never see half-pay officers placed on to full-pay in one Gazette, in order that they may sell out in the next, at the full-pay price, leaving the half-pay officer, who was anxious to serve, the choice of selling at the half-pay price, or continuing his half-pay and half-dinner existence together?

What, but the pleasure of the Horse-Guards, regulates the purchase of unattached commissions? and what, but the same pleasure, brings the promoted favourites

of fortune back to full-pay, with their additional step of rank? Purchase prevents the authorities from giving away, without payment, a commission that is for sale; but it does not prevent them from selecting, among the numerous class of purchasers, for the successful candidate: and it is in the exercise of this power, that patronage is shown. A pretty protection against patronage this indeed, which throws ten doors open to its influence, where there was only one before.

The slow promotion in the Artillery cannot be taken as a criterion of what promotion, without purchase, would be in the Line; because the Artillery is, in regard to numbers, a very limited service, which admits of neither change nor transfer, and into which officers enter after a long course of professional study, and with the general intention of making it their profession for life. Whereas officers are constantly retiring from the Line after a few years' service. Many young men enter the army only for the purpose of agreeably passing away a few years; and in some circles the service is now looked upon as nothing more than a good finishing school of manners. But if there is long study and no purchase in the Artillery, it must still be recollected that, in military estimation, this non-purchasing branch of the service acted more perfectly up to its duties during the war than either of the other branches of the service. The Cavalry, in which purchase prevails to a greater extent than in the Infantry, were, on the other hand, supposed to have been the least efficient of the three arms. I do not exactly lay this, even if true, to the charge of the Cavalry; for the very qualities most required in their service,—dash, daring, and confidence,—were the very qualities that our military system and the efforts of modern patriots tended most to repress.

The partiality with which promotion is granted in the navy is no reason why purchase should be allowed in the army. The navy is always under the immediate control of a member of the government, and is therefore more likely to be made a direct medium for obtaining parliamentary support than the army has ever been made in our time. But unfairly as naval promotion is said to be distributed, we must still bear in mind that the navy had swept the seas, before a British army ventured to show itself in the field. The navy, like their comrades, experienced occasional disasters during the war, but it was only in fair and manly fight against bold and superior adversaries. They never, like the British army at Sacket's Harbour, Platsburg, and Walcheren, fled from phantom hosts and imaginary foes. The navy often sustained heavy losses; but they never handed brave men, defencelessly, over to useless slaughter, as British soldiers were handed over to slaughter at Buenos Ayres and Rosetta. The navy may probably have their weak points as well as their neighbours, but they have neither cuirassiers nor one-handed lancers;—they have neither bear-skin caps to make men hideous, nor bayonets to make them ridiculous.

Men of high merit, we shall be told, have purchased the rank which they hold in the army. Most certainly so, and every officer can name many individuals who, by their noble bearing, have shed a lustre over the rank so acquired. Wealth is no bar to merit, and should form no bar to preferment. The mischief is that many men of no merit also purchase rank; and by doing so they may, and often must, exclude meritorious but unwealthy officers from promotion. In the military profession, a profession on which so much depends, there cannot be too great a supply of merit; and

by conferring promotion on the wealthier classes only, you strike off about one half of the mass of merit which the country could otherwise command,—a diminution of merit for which it must ultimately pay in blood, tears, and shame. But purchase tends to make the army more aristocratic. The mere aristocracy of the officers will no more make the soldiers aristocratic, than the gold of the promoted man of wealth will make them rich. The officers will at all times be aristocratically disposed: their natural leaning must be in favour of the crown; the source of all military rank and reward. Every motive that can influence high-minded men must attach them to the cause of the sovereign and the constitution: so that by having officers capable of gaining the goodwill, respect, and confidence of the soldiers, you will always be sure to have a loyal and obedient army. And the higher you raise the standard of merit, according to which military rank should alone be granted, the greater will be the lustre reflected on the holder of such rank, the greater will be his devotion to the source from whence the distinction is derived, and the more implicit will be the obedience which he will receive from his own immediate subordinates. Previous to the first revolution, the officers of the French army were all noblemen and men of rank, devotedly attached to the cause of their sovereign; but so little was the influence which they exercised over the minds of their men, that not a single soldier of the line pulled a trigger in defence of the unfortunate Louis XVI.

The belief also that the prospect of rapid promotion will alone bribe men of family to enter the army, is an error resulting from ignorance of human character, and one that a mere glance at the number of candidates seeking for admis-

sion into the navy, should have dispelled. The feeling which prompts men to seek for fame, and above all for military fame, has ever been so powerful in the human breast that few young men of healthy and elastic feeling can easily resist its allurement. It is needless therefore to bribe any class of men into the service, as we shall be sure to have all those, worth having, even on our own terms; and we can easily dispense with those who are unwilling to purchase the honourable distinctions of the profession by an honourable share in the toils and privations of its subordinate stations. Horace already avows the existence of this aspiration for fame, when he says—

> "Res gerere et captos ostendere civibus hostes,
> Attingit solium Jovis at Cælestia tentat."
>
> *Lib.* i., *Epis.* xvii.

Juvenal, in the tenth Satire, admits the existence of the same feeling: I quote from recollection, something like Gifford's translation—

> The spoils of war, the trunk in triumph placed,
> And with the gleamings of the battle graced;
> Crushed helms and battered shields, and banners torn
> From vanquished fleets, and beams in triumph borne;
> And captives ranged around, in mournful state,
> Are prized as blessings hardly known to fate!"

Many young men also enter the army under an idea of leading a life of pleasure or of gallantry: and some are, no doubt, allured by the prospect of idleness and the happiness of wearing a showy uniform. These last mentioned sources of military ambition, do not always furnish bad recruits; such feelings are natural enough at the age when men are candidates for commissions, and many a dashing young idler has turned out a good and efficient officer. The most useless officers are those who enter the army without

knowing why or wherefore, and merely because they have money or interest to push them forward; or because judicious friends,—estimating the facility of military duties by the way in which promotion is granted,—deem the hopeful youths fit for no other profession. Such men only follow the mass; accompany their regiments or brigades without knowing the object or meaning of a single movement, though partly executed perhaps, by the very words of command they have mechanically repeated; they step over the heads of better men, by fortune, interest, or money; share in brevet promotions, given for success which they had no further share in bringing about than in being useless spectators of actions in which they could not give a right direction to a single musket; and then astonish fashionable society by displaying the insignia of military rank worn by individuals distinguished only for ignorance, folly, and vapid incapacity.

How, it will be asked, is the relative merit of individuals to be discovered in the midst of blindness, partialities, and in a time-serving age, if promotion is to be given according to merit alone? All I can say at present is, that if there is a will there is a way. Let merit be looked for and it will be found. Make the reward of merit the foundation of the system, and though many errors may at times be committed, yet must the imperfect working of a good system, produce far better results than the most perfect working of a bad one.

Providence, for inscrutable purposes no doubt, seems every where to have made man the enemy of man; and the evil passions implanted in the human breast have forced all the nations of the earth to devote numbers of their citizens to the profession of arms, in order to protect from violence

and aggression the lives and properties of the peaceful and the industrious. But in calling on a portion of their citizens to enter on the toilsome and dangerous trade of war, the nations are, on their part, bound by every sentiment of honour, justice, and humanity to alleviate as far as possible the sufferings of their defenders, and to diminish, by every effort, the dangers to which they are exposed: for what is the plumed helm of the warrior but the garland denoting the victim always ready to be offered up, in melancholy sacrifice, to the blood-stained deity of wrath and war? And the first and best mode of affording this protection, is to place the troops under the most efficient leaders that by an honest and zealous search can possibly be discovered. In such a search men must be as little influenced by the rank and station as by the wealth of the candidates; the highest attainable merit alone must be looked for, and that with a total disregard of favour and affection. We want in the army neither the pedantry of the schools, nor the more useless pedantry of the Martinets. We want high conduct, high feeling, and high character. We want men who by their manners shall gain the affection of the soldiers, and who by their knowledge and bearing shall command the esteem and confidence of these rough and illiterate, but never blind, children of war.

In the hour of battle the soldier must feel, that in following the command of his officer he is following the surest road to victory. Amid the turmoils of home dissension, he must feel that in following the same command he is following the just road of honour, loyalty, and duty. At the voice of his officer, he must be deaf to the arts and instigations of professional demagogues and incendiaries. And should he see brothers, friends, and relations, misled by

evil counsel, arrayed in opinion against him, he must still feel confident that, in obeying the dictates of his superiors, he is obeying the best dictates of the country. But neither wealth nor rank will ever, of themselves, inspire men with this sort of confidence.

We live in times when the efficiency of armies must not be risked to please either patriotic economists or interested theorists. Our empire extends to every quarter of the globe; and, from Lahore to Washington, from Paris to Petersburgh, mighty nations instigated by envy and ambition, are fully prepared to strike at any weak point that ill-judged economy may leave unguarded. The want, or inefficiency of a single battalion, at a proper time or place, may ultimately render necessary the employment of entire armies: and absolute imbecility can alone, in the nineteenth century, talk of returning to the most formidable establishment ever known in earlier times. Not only have our own possessions vastly increased, but independent nations have sprung up in quarters where, a few years ago, feeble colonies alone existed; and states that half a century back exercised little or no influence in Europe, have now become empires of threatening and gigantic strength. The events also of the late wars have taught nations to collect, concentrate, and wield their forces in a manner of which no conception could have been formed by our immediate predecessors. At the commencement of the late war, thirty thousand men formed a strong army; before its close, such a force was little more than a corps or division.

At home the increase of manufactories has raised up a numerous population to an inheritance of heart-rending toil and precarious subsistence. Every change of trade, or

fashion, brings thousands of able and deserving individuals to the very verge of want; practised agitators, aided by a dangerous press, are always at hand ready to influence the angry passions and to instigate the unhappy sufferers to mischief and ruin. And where is the shield to protect us from such ever-threatening storms? The old and long-respected institutions of the land have been swept away by the hasty hand of innovation, and our new institutions whether good or bad, have not yet taken a sufficient hold on the habits and affections of the nation, to ensure, of themselves, order and submission to the law. Under such circumstances a loyal and efficient army can alone secure the continuance of foreign and domestic tranquillity.

How often the country at large, and thousands of individuals in the country, have had occasion to mourn the errors and misconduct of commanders it is needless to say; but the acknowledged fact is enough to show that in such a profession, promotion must be granted only to the highest merit, which the greatest exertion on the part of the military administration can discover and call forth. The holders of authority must shut their eyes to all exterior influence; the House of Peers and the Stock-exchange must alike plead in vain; not a single step, not a day's date in an Ensign's commission, must be yielded to the highest influence in the nation beneath that of the Crown itself. I purposely say the Crown, because I can understand no system of promotion that does not emanate directly from the Sovereign, or from his representative at the head of the army: the power to grant or withhold, military preferment, must remain absolute and unquestioned. No plebeian corporation must attempt to give laws to soldiers; for military duty and the actions of war are of a nature to be performed only at the

bidding of the highest and most exalted power to which men can look up. But a just principle must be justly applied; and whatever long-established usage, or the rules of the service, may prescribe,—honour, patriotism, and christianity all command that, in the army, merit alone should form the criterion of promotion. If the system of purchase is therefore to be defended, it must be on grounds higher than those which call for its abolition, grounds that have yet been considered the highest and the noblest which can influence human actions.

ON THE RELATIVE STRENGTH OF FLEETS AND FORTRESSES.

"Le trident de Neptune est le sceptre du monde."

VOLTAIRE.

BEFORE we begin our enquiry respecting the power of Russia, it will be right to dispose of two questions, bearing essentially on the subject, and which, though often discussed, still seem to remain unsettled. The one is the relative strength of fleets and fortresses; the other, the possibility of an overland invasion of India. Some politicians maintain that it is easy to control Russia by means of naval armaments alone, while others declare that her military force is equal to the conquest of our Indian possession. If we succeed in proving that Russia is as safe from the unsupported attacks of British fleets, as British India is from the attacks of Russian armies; it will leave us free scope to show what danger Britain and Europe have to apprehend from Moscovite power; and what steps may yet be taken to arrest its ominous progress in the east. — Appeals to the force of British fleets, and to the danger of British India, will no longer be sufficient to silence our enquiry.

We must now, in the execution of our task, grapple with a popular delusion, which for the security of our naval and national fame, cannot be too quickly dispelled.

The numerous and splendid victories achieved by British fleets over forts and batteries, have not only tended to make naval attacks popular, but have also led to the very general belief, that ships of war can contend, successfully, against batteries on shore whenever the latter are fairly accessible, and as often as there is anything like a fair proportion, as to the numerical force of guns, between the contending parties. None of the many theories that have resulted from the modern chance-games of war can possibly be more erroneous, or more dangerous; because the public voice may, at some moment of general excitement, induce the government to fit out naval armaments, for the attainment of objects, totally beyond the reach of naval power. Under the mischievous belief, that wooden walls can stand battering as long as stone walls, the lives of British seamen, the fame of the navy, and the honour of the country may be risked in enterprises in which skill and courage can effect nothing, and in which success can be anticipated only from the folly, or the cowardice of the enemy: always precarious foundations on which to trust for victory.

To strike even a pretty large object, with a ball fired from a piece of artillery at a moderate range, is no very easy matter; and the difficulty is, of course, much increased when the gun is placed, as on board a ship, on a moving, or at least a very unsteady platform; and where those whose business it is to take aim are, after the first fire, completely enveloped in smoke. And, though towns and fortresses are not exactly small, or even moderately small objects, they, nevertheless, when situated on a level,

present but a very narrow horizontal line to the fire of shipping, and of this line a still narrower part is vulnerable. To unroof the houses of a few harmless citizens, or to throw shells into a second-rate town, is a mode of warfare, as unworthy as inefficient, and will never induce a commander of ordinary firmness to relinquish his post, or give up the contest. To breach the rampart when there are no troops for debarcation, and when, as in such maritime expeditions generally, there is no intention to storm the works, is, of course, useless; so that the only remaining alternative is to dismount, or to silence the artillery. This can be effected only by striking the guns themselves, or by so completely demolishing the parapet as to prevent the men from working them. The first is difficult, for a gun presents but a very small mark; and the second is not easy, because it requires time, and a great many well-directed shots, as a parapet hardly presents a vulnerable horizontal line of more than six or eight feet in height, even when the guns are on traversing carriages.

In 1809, eight sail of the line, under Sir Richard Strachan, passed Flushing, and kept up, as they went along, so tremendous a fire against the batteries, that French officers who had been present at Austerlitz and Jena, declared, after the surrender, *que la cannonade* in those battles had been a mere *jeu d'enfans* in comparison. Yet, what was, after all, the effect produced on the defences of the place by this fire, so formidable, to judge by the sound alone? The writer can answer the question with some accuracy, for he went along the entire of the sea-line the very day after the capitulation, and found no part of the parapet injured so as to be of the slightest consequence, and only one solitary gun dismounted, evidently by the bursting of a shell,

which could not, of course, have been thrown from the line-of-battle ships, but must have been thrown from the land batteries.

As a contrast to the feeble effect produced by so large a naval force against land batteries, we must here mention the result of another action fought, in the same river, at a later period of the war: it serves strongly to illustrate what can be done by good artillery against even first-rate ships. The small army that, under Lord Lynedoch, advanced towards Antwerp early in 1814, established a post in a bend formed by the Polder Dyke, at some distance below Lillo. The place is called Fort Frederick, though showing no appearance of fortification beyond the barely visible sites of two embrasures; one of these was at a right angle with the course of the river, whilst the other looked diagonally up the stream. A long eighteen-pounder was placed in the first, and a five-and-half inch howitzer in the second. From this post the French determined to dislodge us; and, on a very fine and calm morning, an eighty-gun ship dropped down with the tide, and anchored near the Flanders shore, about 600 yards from the British battery: by her position she was secured from the fire of the eighteen-pounder, and exposed to that of the howitzer only. As soon as everything was made tight, her broadside opened; and if noise and smoke were alone sufficient to ensure success in war, as so many of the moderns seem to think, the result of this strange contest could not have been long doubtful; for the thunder of the French artillery actually made the earth to shake again; but though the earth shook, the single British howitzer was neither dismounted nor silenced; and, though the artillerymen could not, perfectly exposed as they were, stand to their gun

whilst the iron hail was striking thick and fast around, yet no sooner did the enemy's fire slacken for a moment, than they sprang to their post, ready to return at least one shot for eighty. This extraordinary combat lasted from seven o'clock in the morning, till near twelve at noon, when the French ship, having had forty-one men killed or wounded, her commander being in the list of the latter, and having, besides, sustained serious damage in her hull and rigging, returned to Antwerp without effecting anything whatever. The howitzer was not dismounted, the fort was not injured,—there being in fact nothing to injure,—and the British had only one man killed and two wounded.

True, it is, that ships may, when there is a sufficient depth of water, approach so near to the batteries as to prevent, by the heavy fire they bring to bear upon a single point, the landsmen from working their guns; but this can only be effected when batteries are *à fleur d'eau*, or very nearly so, and when the guns are either *en barbette* or in embrasures; for when the works have any elevation, the ships must take so distant a range,—in order to bring their guns to bear,—as to render their shot of very little avail. When, on the other hand, the batteries are provided with traversing carriages, as is now generally the case in sea defences, the men are perfectly secure from all danger as long as the rampart remains standing, except the little that may be apprehended from spherical shot. And to batter down, even an ordinary rampart, with the floating artillery of a fleet, seems to us next to an impossibility, when we recollect the long and well directed fire,—constantly striking, from a short range on the same spot,—that was required to breach even the rickety walls of some of

the Spanish fortresses. A ship of war brings, as we have said, a much greater body of fire to bear upon a single point than a land battery can return from an equal front; yet is the loss which a ship is liable to experience from the fire of the small number of battery-guns, far greater, than any which can be inflicted on the landsmen, by its own superior artillery; as was fully exemplified in the action between the French eighty-gun ship and the single British howitzer mounted at Fort Frederick. Every shot, that strikes a ship, occasions some mischief; whereas a hundred shots may strike a battery without producing any effect whatever. Another instance, of this relative power of ships and batteries, happened on the coast of Corsica early in the Revolution war, where a Martello tower, armed only with a single long-gun, foiled the efforts of two British seventy-fours, during an entire day; and was reduced, at last, only when a carronade, that Sir Sidney Smith had landed, opened upon it from the top of a neighbouring height. A ship of any force is a large object, easily struck by the fixed artillery of forts: the vulnerable part of a battery is, on the contrary, a small object which it is difficult to strike with the floating artillery of ships.

This is saying nothing of the danger which ships have to apprehend from shells and red-hot shot, now thrown with such fatal precision, that no ship dare, in fact, take up a station within fair range of batteries, provided with mortars and furnaces, and defended by men of ordinary skill. Of late years batteries, casemated *á la Montalembert* have also become general along the most important sea defences. These batteries present, like ships, several tiers of guns; which, unlike the guns of a ship, may be worked in comparative safety; for, unless a shot enters an em-

brasure, it effects nothing beyond denting the stone wall; whereas a shot striking a ship's side, is not only destructive itself, but the fragments and splinters which it scatters about in its fury, occasion the most dreadful loss to the crew.

How then, it may be asked, are the many victories, gained by our fleets over land defences, to be accounted for? By circumstances, and by the conduct of our seamen, whose bravery naturally commanded success whenever it was within their reach, and who not unfrequently wrung it, by mere excess of daring, from the fears of their astonished and intimidated adversaries. Naval and military operations present but too many occasions, when both sailors and soldiers are forced to set the ordinary calculations of probability at defiance, and trust to daring and to fortune alone for success; but for government to fit out expeditions on such a principle, would be the height of reprehensible folly, — criminal, as an avowed game of hazard, played with "dice of human bones." It would be doubly criminal in the government of this country, so amply provided with the power of placing the fair means of success at the disposal of efficient armaments. But naval armaments alone, cannot contend successfully against well-constructed and well-defended land batteries: nor is there any thing in naval history to justify the dangerous and erroneous opinion now entertained on the subject.

As the destruction of the Danish sea defences by Lord Nelson, and the attack of Algiers by Lord Exmouth, are frequently quoted to prove the reverse of this, we must say a few words to show the true bearing of both these operations.

Lord Nelson never fired a shot at the town or fortifications of Copenhagen; he destroyed a line of block-ships,

prams and floating batteries that defended the sea approach to the town; and the Crown Prince, seeing the large and comparatively rich capital of his small and not wealthy country, laid open to the fire of the British fleet, was glad to conclude an armistice, and finish a war, the object of which was neither very popular nor well understood. What the result of an action between the defences of Copenhagen and the British fleet might ultimately have been is, therefore, altogether uncertain; but it is certain that Lord Nelson's presence of mind alone saved an English seventy-four from being destroyed by the fire of the Three-crown battery, within range of which the ship had unfortunately got aground. The bombardment of Copenhagen by Lord Nelson, as the decisive victory of the 2nd of April is generally styled, is, therefore, like most of the other oracular phrases of the day, a mere combination of words without the slightest meaning.

The attack of Algiers by Lord Exmouth is another of the instances so exultingly appealed to in order to show what fleets can effect against batteries; and yet it is but little to the purpose, unless to prove what may be accomplished by fleets against towns exactly so circumstanced, placed, and governed. Algiers is situated on an amphitheatre of hills sloping down towards the sea, and presenting, therefore, the fairest mark to the fire of hostile ships; it contained, at the time of the British expedition, the wealth, the arsenals, and all the sinews of the Dey's power; and it was natural for a despot so placed to purchase a peace the moment he saw the foundation of that power falling to pieces along with the crumbling ruins of his town, stores, and arsenals. But where is the other capital *exactly* so situated, that we are ever likely to attack: and, as to the

destruction of a few second-rate towns, even when practicable, it is a mean, unworthy species of warfare by which nothing was ever gained. *

The severe loss sustained before Algiers must also be taken into account, because it was inflicted by mere Algerine artillery, and was much inferior to what may be expected from a contest maintained against batteries manned with soldiers, well instructed by officers of skill and science, not only in working the guns, but in the endless duties of detail necessary for keeping the whole of an artillery

* Nothing but discredit was gained by cannonading a few second-rate towns along the coast of America. And though no important point can be effected against a great European power by naval blockades alone, it is more than probable that a strict and well followed up blockade of the American coast would, in the end, have been attended with considerable success. The Americans are eminently a commercial people; and the American Union is composed of a number of states, all having equal rights, and some having, at times perhaps, individual interests at variance with the measures of the general government. States so situated would, if a war or blockade pressed very hard upon them, easily force the central government into pacific measures, or else they would naturally withdraw themselves from a confederation injurious to their welfare. Such has in all ages been the conduct of federations; and naturally too; men, and states, confederate for mutual advantage and protection, and separate as soon as they find that their union becomes injurious instead of being beneficial. In both our wars with America we made peace at the very time when we should have persevered, and resigned the contest when victory was within our reach. As to the peace of 1783, which secured the independence of America, that must sooner or later have happened; at all events, it is very well: but the treaty of Ghent should never have been signed. That we lost nothing by the war, and made no concession to America, are poor excuses. We had been basely assailed; America had struck at us, even as "damned Casca like a cur behind, struck Cæsar," at the very moment when we were maintaining, single handed, the cause of freedom against bonded Europe: and a power like Britain, should never, under such circumstances, sheathe the

matériel in a proper state of formidable efficiency. That there may have been some French or Italian renegadoes at Algiers is possible; but to instruct and discipline a strong corps of artillerymen, and to keep an entire train of guns in perfect working order, is something far beyond the power of a few unsupported adventurers. The Algerines threw comparatively few shells, and those they did throw, were thrown with little accuracy; nor did they fire a single red-hot shot, a proof that they were not first-rate artillerymen.

Let us now try, by what has been here said, the often proposed measure of sending naval armaments into the Archipelago and the Black-sea. We have had some very fierce cruising, from Malta to Vourla, and from Vourla to Smyrna: we have also had some fierce leading articles, preparing us for great events in quarters where no events, like those anticipated, could possibly occur: and as we are likely enough to have a repetition both of the cruising and writing, it may be as well briefly to examine what can be effected in the Levant by unsupported naval armaments.

In the Archipelago, a Brirish fleet can achieve nothing against Russia; because Russia has neither ports nor sta-

sword except as a conquering power. We wanted nothing from America; we have uncultivated forests enough in Canada; it was the manner of sheathing the sword that, in such a case, was worth entire provinces; and we sheathed the sword in a poor and pitiful manner, fully worthy of the style in which the war had been conducted. Even the boundary question was left unsettled to serve as a ready excuse for future aggression should it suit America again to attack us, the moment she finds us, as in 1812, beset by European foes. The Americans are a clever, brave, and patriotic people, and the higher ranks are, in general, liberal, enlightened, and well educated; but as a nation, the people are ambitious, and, like all republicans, ancient and modern, they are an aggressive people, and must therefore be closely watched.

tions in that quarter, and no trade worth talking about. The influence possessed by Russia in the Levant, results from her great military power; and from the belief that she will, sooner or later, occupy Turkey. As fleets alone cannot defend Turkey, nor indeed any other country on the globe, the sending of fleets to the Archipelago will not even have the effect of destroying the Russian influence in that quarter; and there is nothing else to destroy.

The Black-sea we cannot enter without the consent of Turkey; and we have no right to expect, or to demand that consent, unless we are prepared to defend Turkey against Russia; which by our hostile passage of the Dardanelles, would, for once, have a just cause of complaint against the former power. All that we have a right to demand is, that no Russian ships of war shall be allowed to pass out through the Straits in order to attack us. An English fleet could only enter the Black-sea for the purpose of acting against Turkey or Russia. The Turks would hardly admit their own enemies; in admitting us, they would admit the enemies of Russia; and whoever throws open his gate for the free and hostile passage of my foes, lays himself fairly open to attack. Are we prepared to defend Constantinople?

But, if attacking the weak instead of the strong, we force the passage of the Dardanelles,—no easy matter as we know from experience,—and, under the walls of Constantinople, oblige the Sultan to forego the Russian alliance and give us a free passage through the Upper Strait; what is to be effected in the Euxine? Should there be water enough to admit of large ships approaching Odessa; we might at a severe loss, perhaps, turn a few coasting vessels, destroy the Lazaretto, knock down three or four counting-houses and corn-stores; but no military object, worth the

foremast of a line-of-battle-ship, could be gained by such an attack. If we proceed to Sebastapool, we may, no doubt, at the risk of having some ships set on fire by red-hot-shot, and with the certainty of losing a number of brave men, batter away at the works of that strong-hold, now armed with 380 pieces of artillery, 30 of which are Paixhau mortars,—but without troops we cannot carry the place, and against a mere naval attack the fleet and arsenals will be safe enough. During the last war not a single town, or naval station in Europe, was successfully attacked by fleets alone. Has the science of artillery retrograded, or has the power of gunpowder diminished since the peace?

But if our fleet cannot destroy the Brests and Toulons of the Black-sea, it can, at least in the estimation of our liberal journalists, prevent the Russians from taking possession of Turkey. Vain and dangerous delusion! Should a British fleet *force* the passage of the Dardanelles in order to attack the Russians, the latter will, in order to shut out their enemies, have a fair excuse for occupying Constantinople, and they are not likely to neglect the opportunity. Fleets can no more arrest the march of armies, over hill and plain, than armies can prevent fleets from crossing the Atlantic. Aided by strong fleets, small armies may become very formidable, but it is seldom that fleets and armies can single-handed, effect much against each other. In 1828, five sail of the line would have raised the siege of Varna, and would, probably, have preserved the Turkish empire: but times are changed, and twenty sail of the line, unaided by military force, could now effect nothing; and how the account will stand after Russia shall have been allowed to strike her next grand blow, it is impossible to say.

The time when naval armaments could have lent efficient aid to the Turks, has now passed away; and, unless the

Latin and Teutonic nations of the West, are prepared to acknowledge the dictatorship of the great Slavonic power rising in the East, the possessors of Constantinople will require more powerful assistance than fleets alone can afford. Danger comes not as of old: the Goths, Huns, Vandals, and Avares, formerly broke, in successive swarms upon Europe, as the storm raised ocean, bursting over its usual boundaries, breaks, surge after surge, upon the level land, destroying indeed, but fertilizing the soil over which its passing fury sweeps along. Danger now comes in a less wild though more formidable shape: it comes like a swelling tide, undermining first, and then overwhelming, in its calm and rapid advance, all the established land-marks of the old world. Provinces and empires, which in the times of our fathers, flourished as independent states, or integral portions of kindred nations, have already, in the course of one short generation, sunk beneath its mighty progress: others are threatened, while we are deliberating, in cold debates, whether we shall trust the cause of European freedom to patient protocols, or unsupported navies.

We cruised in the Baltic from 1807 to 1812, and no doubt blockaded the Russian ports with all due strictness; but we did not retard, for a single hour, the unprincipled seizure of Finland: and fleets will now effect as little in the Black-sea, as they formerly effected in the Gulph of Bothnia. The reason is evident enough: the elements have circumscribed the action of ships within distinct and definable bounds; their "march is on the mountain wave," but like the waves which they command, their strength is broken and rolled back by the first bulwark of the land,

"Le trident de Neptune est le sceptre du monde:"

but even this world's sceptre may be shivered, when wielded by unskilful hands.

ON THE OVERLAND INVASION OF INDIA.

"We shall negotiate with the English at Bombay."
Petersburg Gazette.

AN opinion has been gaining ground, for the last half century, that, in the event of a rupture between Great Britain and Russia, an attempt might be made by the latter power against our Indian possessions. It was not the interest of the cabinet of St. Petersburg to allay our ill-concealed fears on this subject: on the contrary, that ambitious and Machiavelian government always made the most of our apprehensions, and took even some pains to ascertain the nature of the countries intervening between the Indus and the Russian frontier; so that nearly as many plans for the overland invasion of India are said to be deposited in the archives of the war-department at Petersburg as at Paris.

It is useless to enter into any detailed account of these schemes: as far as they are known, they serve but to illustrate an important moral truth, showing, that, in exact opposition to the conception of great and noble undertakings, which raise the genius of the projector to the level of their execution, the "base lure of gain" (and all these

plans of Indian conquest originate only in a low desire for plunder) tends only to narrow and contract the judgment in the same proportion that it inflames the imagination.

Colonel Evans, now General in the Spanish service, was the first, so far as is known to the writer of this article, to call attention to the possibility of carrying an army up the line of country traversed, rather than watered, by the Oxus. This long, low, and narrow stripe of *steppe* land, already considered in the time of Herodotus as the usual gate through which the Asiatic tribes invaded Europe, is described by Ritter, in the second volume of his great geographical work just published *, "as almost totally destitute of wood, verdure, or productive earth; the soil everywhere impregnated with salt, covered with drift-sand, and bearing little besides the spare and thorny shrubs of the desert." Notwithstanding the difficulties that the passage through such a country would naturally present to the march of an army, General Evans's idea is still the only one, yet advanced on the subject, that seems at all deserving of serious attention; and how far even his opinion may stand the test of professional investigation remains to be seen.

If, passing over half the obstacles that an army following the route pointed out by General Evans would be certain to encounter, we shall still succeed in showing the impracticability of such an enterprise, we may of course be excused from investigating any of the other plans, hitherto suggested, for driving the "dominators of the sea" out of India, as the execution of the best of those, that are not absolutely ridiculous, offers incomparably greater difficulties than the one against the possible adoption of which by our

* Erdkunde von Asien. Berlin, 1832.

enemies, the General has so timely warned us. The reader will not expect that we should seriously enter the lists against the projectors, who deliberately embark entire French armies on the sea of Suez, where there are neither ships nor materials for building them; or that we should stop to refute the imaginative strategists who, in three sentences, canter fifty thousand warriors of the great nation across the deserts of Syria and of Persia, to the very gates of Calcutta.

In an inquiry of this nature we must reason principally from analogy, because, owing to our imperfect knowledge of Central Asia, we can form but imperfect notions of the difficulties that might be encountered by modern European armies in marching through such half-barbarous regions; and, as to any aid or reinforcements by the way, we cannot possibly comprehend from whence they are to be derived.

And now to the more direct parts of our subject.

Considering the difficulty experienced at Lisbon by Sir John Moore, in merely equipping some twenty thousand British troops for a march into Spain, the complicated operation proposed by General Evans,—of bringing a Russian army down the Wolga, transporting it across the Caspian, landing it in the Bay of Balkan, marching it by Kiava to the Oxus, embarking it on that river, and then ascending to Bokhara,—seems certainly no easy undertaking. Yet, as it cannot be called impracticable, let us suppose it achieved, notwithstanding the jealousy of the natives, and the obstacles, short of actual hostility, they would not fail to throw in the way of its execution. And, having made this liberal concession in favour of the first campaign, let us further suppose a Russian army of adequate strength (whatever that may be), after wintering at

Bokhara, started for the invasion of India at the best season of the year, with all its necessary supplies and *materiél*, and let us then judge, from former events, what would probably be its fate.

Napoleon started from the banks of the Oder in May, 1812, for the invasion of Russia, with about 550,000 men. The main body of this army under his own immediate command, consisted, at the commencement of the campaign, of 295,000 men. On the seventh September it brought only 120,000 into the field of Borodino, and, allowing 30,000 to have fallen in the previous engagements, and this is much above the mark assigned by any of the historians, what became of the 145,000 still left unaccounted for?* Any one acquainted with war can easily answer the question,—they fell to the rear, or perished from want, misery, or fatigue.

The distance this army had to traverse was, in a straight line, less than 500 miles, for many of the French corps were not only in advance of the Oder, but beyond the Vistula. They started from the most fertile countries in Europe, from the midst of their depôts, from cantonments where they had been stationed for years and making preparations for months; their march lay through peopled, civilized and cultivated countries, and was performed in the finest season of the year, and yet they could not, after such a four months' march, bring one half of those into battle who had escaped the sword. We have stated the distance from the Oder to Moscow, in a straight line, at 500 miles, and in military calculations we add an extra

* The second edition of the Marquis De Chambery's Philosophie de la Guerre, states the total number of the grand-army that actually entered Russia at 613,000, so that we have 63,000 men to the good.

quarter to the straight line of distance to make up for the windings of the road, which, together with the *détour* made by the French army round Smolensk, will give a distance of about 700 miles actually marched over.

If, then, a march of 700 miles along fine roads and level ground,—for the country between the Oder and Moscow is almost a perfect flat,—commenced under all the advantages above enumerated, was attended with privations and fatigue sufficient to occasion a loss so tremendous, what is likely to be the fate of an army having double the distance to march before entering fairly on the scene of action, and under circumstances of far greater difficulty and hardship?

The expedition of Hannibal furnishes another example of a similar loss: that great commander took five months to march with his unincumbered ancient army (for he left his heavy baggage behind under the care of Hanno) from New Carthage to the banks of the Po, a distance of 6800 *Roman* stadia, or about 850 Roman miles. With the precaution that might have been expected from such a leader, he had caused all the countries between the Pyrenees and the Alps to be carefully reconnoitred beforehand, and had entered into treaties with the intervening Gallic tribes for the supplies that his army might require; yet notwithstanding these judicious arrangements, he lost two-thirds of his men by the way, though the march was performed in the best season of the year, and free from all opposition, except what was experienced in the Alps, which, having only plunder for its object, was neither very systematic nor very determined.

Let not the *amateur* pedestrian, who journeys pleasantly from one *albergo* or *posada* to another, be surprised at such losses. A march, however fatiguing, that is sure to close

at last with a good supper and a warm bed, and a march from one wet and cheerless bivouac to another, are altogether different things. With regular food, rest and shelter, a man may do a great deal; yet even with these he requires, after long-continued exertion, some respite from toil in order to recruit his exhausted strength. But, in all marches extending into uncultivated countries, beyond the reach of depôts, food, both in quantity and quality, becomes precarious, while rest depends entirely on the clemency of the weather: and every day of want and night of rain lessens, though imperceptibly at first, the soldier's strength, so that in the end, a blistered foot from accident or bad shoes, a slight attack of dysentery from uncertain diet, or only a week's exposure to rain, will oblig a man to fall to the rear. And in a long continuous march, like that to Moscow, or the one now in question, all such men must either delay the whole army, or they are lost; for where the cause of the evil is constant, it cannot be expected that rest, and the means of healing the foot or curing the dysentery,—if even within reach,—should enable the convalescent, not only to make up his lee-way, but to go through what he was unequal to before his illness or accident.

The young and the weak are of course the first to give in: but, as want and fatigue augment, as time flies and hopes decay, the ranks thin in proportion, till at last a few nights of rain and days of deep and cheerless road, or unrefreshed toil and exposure under the scorching rays of a vertical sun, bring down entire sections, and exhibit in the rear of the line of march, scenes of suffering that few who have not witnessed can well picture to themselves, and from which death offers, too frequently the only, and in

such situations, not always the most unwelcome relief. The strong of limb, the high of heart, and above all, the soldier bronzed in many a field, and nerved to toil by many a march, will long indeed bear up against every hardship; but "prolonged endurance tames the bold;" and where is the strength that, for the best part of a year, shall support toil, precarious subsistence, and constant exposure to all weathers, from the frozen snows of the Hindoo-Kho to the boiling exhalations of the Punjab? In ordinary campaigns, carried on at no great distance from the frontiers, the very operations occasion halts and delays that enable convalescents and stragglers to find their way back to the army with the convoy and detachments that are constantly advancing to its aid; but, in crossing the *steppes* of Central Asia, these advantages fall away, and moreover, a musket and sixty rounds of ammunition are in those quarters, treasures not likely to be left in the hands of an invalid.

The distance from Bokhara to Attock on the Indus is, in a straight line drawn on Rennell's map, 630 miles; and from Attock to Delhi in Northern India,—and an army must at least enter the country it intends to invade,—440 more, making 1070 miles; that, in the same proportion at which the march of Napoleon was before estimated, should give at least thirteen or fourteen hundred miles of march, or double the distance that cost the armies of Hannibal and Napoleon nearly two-thirds of their numbers, the line of march being besides intersected by the Hindoo-Kho mountains, the formidable barrier of the Indus, and the five rivers of the Punjab, the former superior, and the latter all equal to European streams of magnitude.

General Evans says, that to arrive at Attock, the first point of probable collision between the invaders and de-

fenders of India, both parties would have to perform a march of nearly equal length; but he forgets that a march through our own, or subject territory, where every preparation may precede the troops, and every aid close in upon them as they advance, and a march through strange, not to say hostile countries, where no preparation can be depended on, and where no aid will close in, cannot possibly be measured by the same scale. It is like sailing the same distance with a fair or with a contrary wind.

Of the Hindoo-Kho, Major Rennell says, that it "swells to a great height and bulk, and is covered with snow till the month of August." And Ritter, in the introduction to the first and only volume of his Geography of Asia yet published, describes it as forming the connecting link between the eastern and western division of the great mountain mass that stretches from the coast of the Corean Sea to the Euxine. The Hindoo-Kho, he says, is not a single mountain chain, like the Andes, but an entire system of such chains, rising to the greatest elevation, and forming, in its unconquered loneliness, the almost unknown and untravelled mountain centre of the entire continent. From Arrian* we also know that it took Alexander's army fifteen days of great suffering, owing to the deep snow, and the total want of all necessaries, to cross the northern ridge alone; and Q. Curtius tells us, that the whole country is so constantly covered with frozen snow, that no traces of birds or beasts are to be found in it.

* We may safely follow Arrian: he was not, like so many modern historians, a mere compiler of history unable to analyse the events which he related, but was an able tactician, a victorious commander, a statesman and a man of letters. When he wrote his history he had also before him the works of Ptolemy and Aristobulus, who had both accompanied Alexander in his expedition.

Monsieur de St. Croix amply establishes the veracity of the ancient historians, by the corroborating testimony of Bernier, Forster, Shereffedin, Backoy, and the Jesuit missionary Desideri, which last, after speaking of the dreadful cold he experienced in these regions, says, "*ces montagnes sont une vraie image de la tristesse, de l'horreur et de la mort méme.*" What may be the extent or height of these mountains has never, we believe, been ascertained; but as we know that their tops are constantly covered with snow, and as the lowest line of perpetual snow on the northern ridge of the Himalaya, of which they form but a continuation, is 17,000 feet above the level of the sea, and as the base and ramification of all mountains, except in mere volcanic formations, are in exact proportion to their height, we may easily conceive what an extent of mountain wilderness they must present, and what a formidable obstacle they would oppose to the progress of a heavily encumbered European army. Major Dirom, in his account of the Campaign of 1791, says, that "after the road over the Ghaut had been finished, it took three weeks of hard labour to bring the battering-train, consisting of only fourteen eighteen-pounders, with their stores and tumbrils, to the top of the hill." Yet the Ghaut is but a single range, the highest part of which is nowhere 5000 feet above the level of the sea, or less than one-third of the known height of the Hindoo-Kho.

Making every allowance for the beauty and fertility of Caubul, a sort of gigantic Switzerland according to Major Rennell, being "made up of mountains covered with perpetual snow, hills of moderate height, rich plains, stately forests," &c., the country nearer the Indus is evidently of a very rugged nature; for independent of the many difficult

streams Alexander's army had to pass, and such rocks as Aornas, and others mentioned by the historians, he was obliged to cause roads to be levelled even for the march of his Macedonian army, though that army was perfectly unencumbered with baggage, the king having ordered the whole to be burnt previous to the Indian expedition. What figure a European army would make in such a country we shall see presently.

Colonel Snodgrass, in his History of the Burmese War, says, that "the army generally covered about five miles of road in its march up the Irawady, and that the head of the column had often arrived at its halting place before the rear had started. Now, if an army, never exceeding 5000 men, marching through a level, though not an open country, and whose stores were all conveyed by water, lengthened out to five miles, to what distance might an army of 40,000, or 50,000 men, encumbered with all its artillery, and with at least 150,000 * beasts of burden, lengthen out, in winding through the trackless defiles of the rugged and difficult country leading down towards the Indus? If we say only fifty or sixty miles, which is making no allowance for stores, does not the very idea of such an enterprise at once become almost ridiculous?—for parallel columns are out of the question, where one practical path will be difficult enough to find.

What is this scattered mass, "dragging its slow length along," to do, if attacked in rear by a few light infantry

* Far too small a number. Major Dirom says, that the cattle belonging to the confederate army before Seringapatam, and to the *bringarries,* amounted to nearly half a million, besides several hundred elephants, and nine thousand camels. Yet the army was comparatively close to its depôts. Multiply half the number of your cattle by the length of a horse or mule, and see what a result it gives.

only?—the head of the column is five or six days in advance, and the rest in proportion. Wherever a halt is made, it leaves an opening never likely to be regained; the advance may be overthrown before it can be supported, and the flanks are of course perfectly defenceless. Let any one fancy such a mass winding along the side of a difficult torrent or ravine, or beneath some high wall of granite, where a few hundreds or dozens only of marksmen have contrived to shelter themselves, and then fancy the confusion occasioned by the firing, the distress of the wounded, the floundering and plunging of horses, and the upsetting of guns, and the same scene acted perhaps at the same time in five or six points of the line of march,—night setting in, and the right track lost.

Alexander, it may be said, easily overcame those who attempted to impede his march; but he was never systematically opposed; and besides, modern arms are for this sort of warfare, and for this only, far superior to those of the ancients. Entire battalions may be brought down by the musket and rifle from across torrents and precipices, at a distance at which the ancients could only be quiet spectators of the movements of their enemies. To secure or clear the flank of every difficult pass, on such a line of march, would of itself require an army and delay the march *ad infinitum*,—while to divide the army, into a succession of columns, would only augment the number of weak points, without in the least diminishing the evil. In such an expedition the just principles of military basis, so ably explained by Bulow, must be entirely set aside; yet have they never been deviated from with impunity when resistance was made. Napoleon lost his army at Moscow for disregarding them; and Diebitsch forfeited at Warsaw the

false and short-lived fame he had acquired by slighting them at Adrianople.

A European army arriving after such a march in the countries leading down to the Indus; finding itself attacked, in front, flank and rear, by bodies of light troops skilfully commanded, always giving way, but constantly returning, and finding the passage of the river securely guarded, should,—were duty done on every hand, have no alternative left but to lay down their arms. Napoleon said to his army before the battle of Borodino, "*La battaille vous est nécessaire,*"—meaning, that the quarters of refreshment a victory would secure, were indispensable in their situation. And it was truly said; for, let any one suppose this army, instead of finding rest and refreshment at Moscow, obliged to march two hundred miles farther through a rugged country, mostly laid waste, and arriving at last, not in good quarters, but on the banks of a river like the Indus.

How, in fact, is a stream of such magnitude to be passed in the face of a vigilant enemy? It must not be considered as an operation easily performed, because, as General Evans says, such enterprises have generally proved successful in European warfare. It is here to be performed after a thousand miles of march over barely passable roads, want and toil having most certainly attended every step; it must be achieved in the face of a practised enemy, who, from the nature of the country, the scarcity of direct and the total absence of diverging roads, will know the very spot where invaders must reach the river. The Indus, twenty miles above Attock, where Foster crossed it, is already deep, rapid, and "three-quarters of a mile in breadth;" and Frazer says, that "owing to the depth and rapidity of the stream, and to the rugged nature of its

banks, it is only passable for an army at Attock," the ancient Taxila. How, under such circumstances, we again ask, is this river, which cannot be turned, to be passed?

In European warfare, the passage of rivers is effected by arriving unexpectedly at some unguarded point; stealing a march for that purpose, to the right or left, or driving the defenders from the opposite bank by a superiority of fire, and then crossing by means of pontoons, or such materials as the country may afford. We have already seen, that to arrive unexpectedly at an unguarded point of the Indus is out of the question: to steal a march through an Indian jungle is difficult, through an Indian forest impossible; and would besides lead only to points all equally destitute of the means of effecting a passage: for, whoever has seen a pontoon-train floundering along a well Macadamized road in Europe, will hardly expect to see such an exhibition on the Indus.

Rafts may, no doubt, be constructed on some of the minor rivers and floated into the main stream; but, as no fire of artillery can afford them protection across a river of such breadth, and as they are not very manageable in a strong current, they will form, at the best, a precarious navigation. But, whatever contrivance may be devised, it will require time; and to give the non-military reader an idea of the value of time to a suffering and exhausted army is totally impossible; for there is no standard of sufficient magnitude by which it can be estimated. Gold and jewels are but dross in comparison,—and fast as it always flies, fast as it may fly in love and beauty's bower, it flies even there with leaden wings compared to the lightning-speed with which it leaves an army that must pay with its ebbing particles of life for every hour's delay, and on which the loss of a day may bring ruin and destruction. Had An-

tioch held out a few days longer, the 50,000 survivors of the million of crusaders that entered Asia with Godfrey of Bouillon, must have perished; and the army of Barbarossa was only saved from dying of thirst, hunger, and fatigue, by the capture of Iconium: had that place been defended for a single day, or been a single march farther off, it never would have been captured by the exhausted remains of an army led by the greatest man of the period.

As the passage of the Indus will have been good practice for effecting the passage of the five rivers of the Punjab, we shall, with our usual liberality, suppose them all crossed, and the invading army arrived in the level country to the north of Delhi, which Major Rennell represents as the battle-ground where, in all ages, the fate of India has been decided. But, before proceeding any farther, we must first stop to inquire how long the invaders may have been in performing the march from Bokhara, and how they contrived to find provisions by the way.

If the French required from May to September to march over seven hundred miles of level road,—for the Russians never attempted to impede their advance, except at Smolensk and Borodino, Buonaparte's great difficulty being always to overtake his flying enemies,—what time must an army require to march double the distance, under the additional difficulties already mentioned? And having besides to make a great part of the road for the conveyance of its artillery! If we say only double the time,—and how much more might we not say?—then winter must set in. In the higher regions of these districts, winter is even colder than in Russia; and in the lower grounds the rains prevail to an extent, that the following extract from the Subaltern's Log-Book will best show:—

"The rain continued so incessantly, that we made no

progress; never did I witness heavier rain, with stronger wind: trees were torn up by the roots in every direction; the rivers were so swoln that we were constantly obliged to halt to wait until they went down. On the 24th October the rains became so heavy, that we could not proceed, and were obliged to halt in a swamp close to a jungle. Our tents were far in the rear, and none of our baggage had come up: during that dreadful day, it was with difficulty we could sit on our horses. We remained in this state for three days,—and I scarcely know how our lives were preserved,—fevers and other diseases were contracted, which carried off many. On our getting to the regiment, I heard that one hundred men went to an early grave, owing to what they suffered on this dreadful occasion."

If a single battalion, marching from one quiet cantonment to another, with every Indian comfort to help and recruit them, suffered so severely, what might, from similar causes, be the loss of an army cut off from all comforts, engaged in a long and toilsome march, and on the point of encountering the enemy? Segur says, that the Grand army lost 10,000 horses, besides men and baggage, in consequence of a storm that happened on the very day they crossed the Niemen. In the first French invasion of Portugal, the whole of Junot's army was dispersed by a two days' storm, near Alfayates; and we know that Charles V. was obliged to raise the siege of Algiers, owing to what his army suffered from a similar cause. The generous and magnanimous motives, free from all mean views of pelf, that will alone prompt the invasion of India, will no doubt induce the invaders to look to Providence for protection against similar mishaps, and they will do well; for without such aid, the snow-storms of the Hindoo-Kho, the rushing

avalanches of Caubul, or the tornados of the Punjab, may furnish another instance of the wretched weakness of man, when sent forth unsheltered to face the elements in their wrath.

Besides, how are provisions to be got in these wilds? Plenty of beasts of burden for the carriage of all kinds of food and stores may, no doubt, be found in Tartary; but how is forage for the carriers to be found? And where is the narrow line of march that can support such a number? The mule, the most useful beast of burden, carries only 300lbs. weight, and requires at least 15lbs. of food daily, so that it can, in fact, carry only twenty days provender for its own consumption. On green forage no continued work can be done; and even that is to be found only in verdant districts, immediately after the rains, or by diverging to a dangerous distance from the road. How then is this difficulty to be got over? To depend for supplies on countries thinly inhabited by nomad tribes, would be precarious indeed; for, though the natives might not attempt any direct opposition, they would be pretty sure to act the part of retreating enemies, and remove all their goods and chattels beyond the reach of the invaders.

Even the best-behaved armies seldom find friends in the countries they traverse, because they naturally inspire fear. When it is discovered that they do no harm, and that they pay in hard cash, then indeed people will be as ready to cheat as they were before to plunder them; but this is an understanding that it requires time to arrive at. In Central Asia it has never been heard, or dreamt of; there, plunder is the general vocation; and being besides the cheapest and simplest mode of making the most of the passing strangers, it will, no doubt, be the one resorted to.

Acts of violence and retaliation follow as a matter of course, so that the long line of march becomes, in the end, but one continued skirmish; not in itself dangerous to the practised soldier, but ruinous from circumstances. In European warfare, the power of requisition, the orders of government, or the hopes of gain, bring down supplies from the countries adjoining the line of operations, and the number of roads permit armies to march in several columns; but, in Central Asia, all this is out of the question. A few caravan-tracts are the only roads, and the advance of an army drives everything before it, in a country where the little that exists is easily removed.

That there may be some fine and fertile valleys enclosed between the Hindoo-Kho and the Indus, is probable; but ample allowance must be made, nevertheless, for the glowing imagination of the Oriental writers who have described them, as well as for the Europeans whose accounts seem to corroborate such testimony. It must be recollected, that any thing like a verdant country will make a pleasant impression on a wearied caravan-traveller, just in proportion to the wild and barren scenes he may before have passed through:—only there is a wide difference between what such a traveller will call a fertile country, and what will be so considered by the person who looks at it with a view to its supporting an army.

Economists would say, and for once say truly, that where there is no demand there will be no supply; and in inland districts, inhabited mostly by moving tribes, destitute of roads and navigable rivers, as are the countries between the Indus and the Oxus, carrying on little or no trade, and least of all in such bulky articles as the necessaries of life, no supply of provisions equal to the demand

of a large army will ever be found; as there is no rational ground on which the rearing and storing of so great, and in ordinary times, useless a quantity of food could possibly be accounted for. The ancient Germans, according to Tacitus, weighed all their plans after fasting as well as after feasting,—a judicious mode of proceeding, that we strongly recommend to the projectors of an over-land invasion of India. It will impress upon their feelings the importance of this part of the subject; for, let the finest army that ever took the field be but six days without food, and it will on the seventh be glad to exchange all the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war," for a mess of pottage.

To give the non-military reader an idea of the endless, and, unfortunately also, indispensable *attirail* of modern armies, is totally impossible; but Manstien mentions in his Memoirs, that in the campaign of 1770, the Russian armies in Moldavia had from 70,000 to 90,000 one-horse waggons in their train, and were yet in want of everything; nor is the improvement that may since then have taken place likely to be in proportion to the increased distance and difficulties that would attend a march to India. To take, for instance, ammunition alone, the least bulky, but most indispensable article required for a campaign, and the want of which, for a single hour, might prove decisive to the fate of an army. Every soldier carries sixty rounds of ball-cartridge, weighing, at twelve cartridges to the pound, about five pounds; so that a single additional supply for 60,000 men would require 1000 beasts of burden for its conveyance: and how soon soldiers fire away their ammunition, independently of the damage to which it is liable, may be judged from the fact, that the French actually fired away three millions of ball-cartridges during

their few days' operations before Algiers. Further, during the Spanish sieges, every British 24-pounder fired about 300 pounds per day,—a thing never before equalled,—making, at 32 pounds per round, powder and shot, a daily expenditure of 9,600 weight per gun. St. Sebastian, which was at last taken only after one of the most desperate assaults recorded in history, was battered at this rate for nine days with 20 guns, so that the expenditure, in heavy ordnance-ammunition alone, must have amounted to 1,728,000 weight, that, if carried over-land, would have required 5,760 beasts of burden for its conveyance. As India has many Sebastians, defended too by those who have mounted some breaches, and who, as yet, have fled from no ramparts,—how many mule-loads of ammunition may it be advisable for the invaders to take with them on their expedition? That they will have no 24-pounders in their train may be taken for granted; but to obtain the same result with guns of a less calibre, requires not only more time, but more ammunition also. We are, in truth, allowing artillery to pass in courtesy only, for no heavy gun-carriages could stand such a march, even with the cumbrous means of repair that the artillery carry along with them.

That, independently of food, clothing, and medicines, ammunition is not the only requisite in modern warfare, may be seen in Colonel Jones's very excellent account of the Spanish sieges. It is there shown, that the first siege of Badajoz actually failed, and that all the sieges were greatly impeded, for want of engineers' tools, which, owing to the deficiency of conveyance, could not be brought up in adequate numbers. The same want of conveyance occasioned the unfortunate siege of Burgos to be carried on without any battering-train whatever. Does not this

strange fact seem almost conclusive of the question? For, if the British army and the Portuguese government together could not find the means of bringing a proper supply of engineers' tools, in addition to other implements of war, over good roads to Badajoz, and a few battering-guns to Burgos, where will the means be found, capable of bringing them all the way across the high and trackless *steppes* of central Asia, from the Caspian to the Indus?

As facts are sometimes said to be as good as arguments, we here beg to add another of the same kind. The Duke of Wellington, in his letter to the Marquis of Wellesley, dated 30th October, 1809, says, that "owing to the bad forage, and to the want of regular supplies, the army lost 1500 horses in five weeks, exclusive of those lost in battle," making something more, perhaps, than a quarter of their whole number. This was during the Talavera campaign, in the best season of the year, and in the valley of the Tagus, the finest part of Spain, not perhaps inferior to Caubul; so that, supposing the invaders of India to meet with no worse weather, climate, or country on their march, and to suffer only in the same proportion, they would yet be totally destitute of cavalry and artillery, long before reaching the Indus.

How, then, it may be asked, did Alexander, Nadir Shah, and others, reach India? It is easily shown; and as General Evans lays some stress on the long marches of the Macedonian conqueror in Persia, and as Mr. Buckingham, whose local knowledge entitles his opinion to notice, advocates the possibility of an invasion of India through that country, we must here go a little out of our way to say a few words on both subjects.

Alexander's army was an ancient and a Macedonian

army, and differed as much from a modern one as the present state of Persia differs from the ancient. A rich, civilized, and cultivated country could easily supply provisions for a Macedonian army, and that was nearly all such an army required; but endless ruins, scattered in the midst of barren deserts, alone mark the spots where Suza, Babylon, and Persepolis stood. Where thousands lived in luxurious abundance, the curious traveller can now barely find food for himself and his followers; the country is totally changed; the means of supporting armies have vanished, while the wants of armed bodies have increased in a tenfold degree.

A little corn, ground between two stones, sufficed for the Macedonian soldier; and armed with his shield and sarissa, he was independent of the endless *matériel* that renders modern armies so slow and unwieldy; whilst the positive nature of ancient tactics easily dispensed with a large proportion of officers, whose horses, baggage, and attendants of every kind, now so much increase the followers of armies. Skilful in the use of arms, and knowing his exact place in the ranks, the ancient soldier knew, individually, almost everything that he could, under any circumstances, be called upon to perform. The close and deep formation of the phalanx confined the movements of entire armies to less ground than a modern brigade would occupy; their battles, fought mostly by day, and on level ground, enabled the chief not only to overlook the entire body, but his voice could give the necessary orders, and the pointing of a standard indicated the direction of a movement.

But these things are sadly changed now. Owing to the effects of artillery, extended formations have become

necessary. Modern battles spread over miles of ground, so that, independently of the clouds of smoke, a very small portion of the combatants can be within sight, and still fewer within the hearing of the commander; he must therefore depend on reports brought from a distance, and send his orders in the same manner, which alone renders a numerous staff necessary to all who command, from a battalion to an army. To perform, with the automatons to which modern tactics have reduced the private soldiers, complicated movements under the fire of artillery, that from a distance sweeps entire sections away; to take up exact formations with such men, under a shower of musket-balls, when both friends and foes are enveloped by clouds of smoke, and nothing is heard but the incessant noise of fire-arms, great and small, requires not only a large proportion of officers, but an unbroken chain of communication from the general-in-chief down to the youngest leader of a subdivision, far more complicated than anything the ancients ever dreamed of in performing their simple and straightforward movements.

Then organize, it has been said, a modern army on the system of the ancients. But the materials are no longer extant. In the ancient world—in Greece and Rome, at least—all freemen were, from infancy, trained bodily and mentally to the profession of arms; it was the universal vocation; so that military ideas, habits, and knowledge, grew "with their growth, and strengthened with their strength."

The Macedonians, in particular, of whom we are speaking, were, according to Arrian, a nation of shepherds constantly obliged to defend their flocks sword in hand, and whose institutions were all of a military nature. Such men, trained from early youth to athletic exercises, were

capable of undergoing privations and performing marches not to be expected from modern armies. For instance, when Alexander went to attack Spitamenes, then besieging the citadel of Maracanda, he marched 1500 stadia in three days, which, at the lowest estimate assigned by Major Rennell for the itinerary stadium of Arrian, gives, in round numbers, a rate of forty-five miles a day,—a distance that few men in the ranks of modern armies could march over at any time, and still fewer with their heavy arms, baggage, and appointments.

But, though the expedition of Alexander cannot serve as a precedent in modern times, the loss he sustained in his Indian campaign may serve as a warning. What the exact amount was, we do not know; but it was sufficient to terrify his followers,—men who had given ample proof that they were not easily daunted, but who now forced their reluctant monarch to turn back from the banks of the Hyphasis, one of the tributaries of the Indus, before he had fairly entered, much less conquered, India. But had he marched triumphantly even to Cape Comorin, it would prove nothing in the present question. The Macedonian army, far superior to the mercenaries of Hannibal, traversed without difficulty the whole of Asia Minor, where, fourteen centuries afterwards, hundreds of thousands of crusaders perished from want and fatigue in the comparatively short march from Galliopolis to Antioch; and the 40,000 French, who landed in Egypt under Napoleon, could not even extend their conquests to the walls of Acre. There having been giants on the earth, is no reason why pigmies should fancy themselves capable of bestriding the majestic world.

Let us now see how far the expedition of Nadir Shah

bears on the subject. That conqueror, who was a native of one of the mountainous districts bordering upon India, invaded the country in 1739, at the head of some 60,000 of his followers,—men who had before raised him to the throne of Persia, and who knew well the ground they had to go over. A horde of Eastern warriors, mostly mounted, easily traverse large tracts of country. Even as far back as the time of the Romans, they were famous for such marches; and Tacitus, in the eleventh book of the Annals, states that Bardanes marched three thousand stadia in two days—"*biduo tria millia stadiorum invadit;*"—and many other marches are recorded, which no Europeans could possibly perform in that climate. Such armies have neither stores, baggage, nor ammunition to look after. The general rendezvous and object of the march are known, and each man finds his way onward in the best manner he can: if provisions and forage are not found at one place, it is only riding some ten or twenty miles farther. If a tract of desert is known to intervene, they take a few days' food with them on their horses, and force a march across at a rate that no European could dream of, and rest and recruit themselves when they get to a fertile district. Those who can thus eat and plunder their way through, join at the trysting place, and dash onward; those who cannot, are never inquired after. If the first onset succeeds, well and good; if not, it is "*sauve qui peut.*" But as to systematic operations, they are never thought of.

In this way Nadir Shah took Delhi with little opposition from the weak and timid soldiers of the Mogul; called himself conqueror of India, into which he had hardly penetrated; and returned loaded with spoil, the real object of the expedition. Such predatory invasions, undertaken

against practised and warlike enemies, can never end in anything but discomfiture and disgrace. An enemy of this kind could not now capture the most ordinary village or hamlet—could not even approach a cane-field or rice-ground; and the passage of a jungle or a forest would be certain destruction,—the very fate that the Pindarees, the exact representatives of such armies, experienced a few years ago.

In the present state of the science of war, no army, be its numbers ever so great, can bring any offensive operation of magnitude to a successful termination, if destitute of any of the three branches constituting the strength of armies. The absence of artillery, for instance, the most cumbrous of all, renders an ordinary field-work or well-stockaded post unassailable, unless with a loss that the army of Xerxes could not long support; for notwithstanding the number of posts and redoubts carried by bloodless bayonets during the late war, it may be safely asserted that a well-stockaded field redoubt, defended by British infantry, would be nearly impregnable to infantry alone. What, indeed, are the assailants to do on arriving at the ditch of such a work, from behind the parapet of which two rows of infantry are coolly and in perfect security plying their muskets? To press on is useless, owing to the stockade; and to cut it down under the fire of men who do their duty, is in truth no easy matter;—there seems nothing left for it but to fill the ditch and top the stockade with the slain, or to go to the right about; and the latter alternative, being the simplest, would probably be the one chosen.

We are, of course, speaking of off-handed attacks only. With preparation more may no doubt be effected against mere redoubts: but we all recollect the convents of Sala-

manca, that were not easily taken even with preparation, and the aid of artillery to boot; and India will not be found destitute of temples, pagodas, and buildings of strength. British infantry, whose strength is, or should be, in the attack, were seldom called upon, during the late war, to defend works or posts; but they proved at the very last what they were capable of in this way. The night of the sortie from Bayonne, Captain Forster, of the 38th regiment, maintained with his company a house, the lower part of which the enemy were actually in possession of: and the most desperate and often-repeated attacks of the French failed to drive Captain Bulkeley and a party of the Royals from the church of St. Etienne: "Defend the church of St. Etienne to the last!" were the dying words of General Hay; and aptly executed was the order, sealed with the death of the gallant veteran. "Don't spare them, lads—there's plenty of room for more in the church-yard!" was Bulkeley's injunction to his men; and never was a church-yard better filled in so short a time.

How incapable European troops are of performing marches perfectly easy to Asiatics, has also been shown within these few years. Bundaloo, the Burmese general, marched his entire army the whole way from Aracan to Rangoon; yet a small British force of only 2,000 men was, next season, unable to reach even the banks of the Irawadi by the same tract, a distance of only 150 miles, about equal to what the Eastern cavalry of Bardanes traversed in one day, and the army of Alexander in three. The Assam detachment, having but little farther to go, never effected its junction with Sir Archibald Campbell at all.

When the schoolmaster shall have traversed the plains of Tartary, when the great Chan shall have conned his

Adam Smith, and when M'Adam shall have stretched his polypus arms across the Hindoo-Kho,—then, and not till then, we may seriously talk of an overland invasion of India. What its results may then prove, it would, of course, be idle to speculate upon, seeing that we do not know what may then be the relative situation of the different parties; but what would now be the result of an actual invasion of India, if an army could get there, may be pretty well made out by a reference to history and to those principles which generally influence human actions. And as we have already supposed the invaders safely arrived in Northern India, let us now see what would probably be their fate.

It has been said that such is the misgovernment of India, —meaning that so ill-governed are the many for the benefit of the few,—that a hostile army has only to show itself on the soil of Hindostan, to ensure a general rising in its favour. This assertion we venture to combat: the countryman may, after long sunshine, wish for a reviving shower, but he will not, on that account, hail the rising of the tropical thunder-cloud that bears the wide-wasting tornado in its bosom. The time of mere capricious tyranny has long since passed away, not only from our country, but from our colonies also: the press and public opinion, by rendering the government in some measure dependent on the support of the governed, have linked their interest so closely together, that the advantage of the former can only be forwarded by the prosperity of the latter: and, though it may not be given to all men to act up to the stations in which chance at times places them, yet low and grovelling indeed must be the mind that will not be excited by preferment to noble exertion. The bad in grain alone are hardened by prosperity; in all others, fortune and success

will kindle to a flame the slightest spark of just and honourable feeling.

But leaving virtue and noble ambition out of the question, as it appears they must never be conceded to rulers for the time being, by what means can the private objects of the governors be so surely attained as by a wise and upright discharge of the duties intrusted to them? Who would be a slave for farthings when honour offered thousands? Errors and mistakes there may be, perhaps must be in mere earthly governments; but to suppose that where there is light to guide, and where the object is good, the balance of result will yet be evil, is a monstrosity implying no less than the existence of some dark power, capable of counteracting all the best efforts of human exertion. That the government of India must, at times, have fallen into error, is self-evident; for no general system of laws or regulations, however wise in theory, could possibly have been applicable to the government of the heterogeneous mass that so suddenly came under their sway: all that could be done was to remove the causes of evil as they became apparent; and the wonder only is, that a government of such mere expediency should already have performed such great things.

From the earliest times until its entire subjugation by the British, India appears to have been divided into sects, castes, tribes, and nations; the latter, as usual, more frequently at war with each other than at peace: so that there never was, in fact, one entire Indian nation, or united Indian people; nor is there now any general bias or feeling in the country, except what is arrayed on the side of the British; being the natural bias of all those individuals, of whatever sect they may be, who are doing well and pros-

pering. There are, no doubt, many princes who have lost their real sovereignty, and men of rank who have lost their power, and who would be glad of any change likely to restore them to their former consequence; there may also be a number of turbulent adventurers willing to join any enterprise holding out a prospect of fame and fortune; but they form no united class or nation, and are only so many isolated individuals, scattered over an immense country, without any connecting link capable of ensuring a simultaneous and combined mode of action;—so that, joining the invaders, if at all, in small detachments only, more in want of aid than capable of affording it, and infinitely more disposed to plunder under the protection of the strangers than to fight for them, they would embarrass more than they could possibly assist.

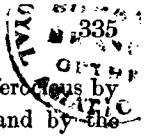
The princes of Hindostan have lost the power of bringing their former subjects into the field; and the peaceful artisan or labourer will not leave his house and home at the mere beck of a despot, who can no longer compel, and whose government never afforded the security and protection that are enjoyed under the British. Religious toleration, in its fullest extent, has ever been looked upon by the Hindoos as constituting, in some measure, civil liberty and national independence; and the government that respects their prejudices, and grants them protection and perfect freedom in all lawful pursuits, will always be sure of their support, and all things considered, no great wonder either.

The comparatively small number of Mahometans are, no doubt, of a more restless and turbulent disposition; but while they also enjoy personal freedom and religious toleration, it will be difficult to show on what principle

they would abandon one Christian power granting such protection, to join the standard of strangers, (least of all that of Russia, to the followers of the Prophet the most hateful of all the christian powers,) of whose future intentions they could know nothing. Such conduct is not consistent with human nature, least of all with the cautious character of the Orientals,—a truth that was strongly illustrated during the late Burmese war.

When the British army attacked Rangoon, it was expected that the people of Pegu, who had but lately been subdued by the Birmans, and had not been over well treated by them, would have joined us against their conquerors and oppressors; and that the Siamese, who had also their full share of wrongs to avenge and some fine provinces to reclaim, would have availed themselves of the same opportunity. From recent conquest, and from the capricious despotism of Asiatic governments, there was some plausible ground for entertaining such an expectation, and yet it was in neither instance realized; the people of Pegu remained quiet to a man, and the Siamese contented themselves with sending a complimentary letter to Sir Archibald Campbell, styling him the taker of towns indeed, but leaving him the undivided honour of making the captures himself.

On what rational principle are we then to suppose that the people of Hindostan would act differently, and rebel against the best government they or their fathers ever knew, merely to assist strangers of whom they could know nothing? It would be a far juster conclusion to say, that the sensitive prejudices of the Hindoos, and the stern bigotry of the Mahometans, would make them fly with horror from the brutality of Russian soldiers unacquainted



with their habits and feelings, and rendered ferocious by the fatigues and privations of a long march, and by the disappointment of finding war and toil, instead of luxury and repose awaiting their arrival in the land of promise.

The British army was on two occasions sent to assist nations in throwing off the yoke of foes really oppressive and justly hated by all ranks. Both in the Peninsula and in Holland we were received with loud cheers:—"*Vive el Rey!*" was shouted in the one, and "*Orange boven!*" in the other; nor did "Turk Gregory ever do such deeds in arms" as were to be achieved by our side; but as soon as the battle was to be fought, or difficulties to be overcome, we were in both countries, left to our own recources: Colonel Napier's book has done justice to the value of the Spanish assistance; and, in the short campaign of 1814, not a single Dutch soldier appeared in the field. The Roman yoke was not a light one, yet none of the allies fell off, even in favour of Hannibal, till after the battle of Cannæ; and the wonder only is, that, after such a catastrophe, any remained faithful. History is full of instances that show how much rather men bear

> "the ills they have,
> Than fly to others that they know not of."

After the defeat of the Danes and the peace of Lubeck, in 1629, protestant Germany was left at the mercy of the emperor, and experienced "such mercy as men show in civil wars." The chronicles of the times being, in fact, little more than records of the excesses committed by the lawless bands of Tilly and of Wallenstein; yet in the following year, when Gustavus Adolphus landed in Pomerania at the head of a Swedish army, not a single man joined his standard. It was not till a year's success had given

him firm footing, and till the *forced* alliance of the Saxons had enabled the combined armies to gain the decisive battle of Leipzig, that the Protestant princes ventured to join their deliverer, who, by the fortune of war, had become the stronger. When the invaders of India shall have gained such a victory, they may expect to be joined by all the Hindoo tribes and nations who shall have wrongs to avenge equal to those the German Protestants had to complain of; that is, who shall have seen their religion proscribed, their temples demolished before their eyes, their children torn from them to be educated in a different faith, and their possessions placed at the mercy of a lawless and ferocious soldiery.

Let us now see what prospect there is of the invaders gaining such a victory over the men of whom Foy says, "*Au jour de combat on retrouvera les soldats d'Alexandre,*" and the "stern combat of Talavera" may serve as a standard. Napier states the British force engaged at 20,000 men, feebly aided by 40,000 Spaniards; and the French he estimates at 50,000. Including the European regiments of the East India Company, and one or two battalions that, in case of emergency, could easily be brought from Ceylon, very nearly that number of British might even now be assembled in India, and could be assisted by sixty or even one hundred thousand Sepoys, far superior, both in bravery and discipline, to the Spaniards of Cuesta, who could not be depended upon for a single movement, but remained quiet spectators of the action. The invaders of India will, therefore, have to effect more on the day of battle than 50,000 French troops, in high order, and commanded by experienced officers, were able to effect in Spain at the very gates of their magazines.

Bearing in mind the losses sustained by the armies of Hannibal and of Napoleon, in performing the much shorter marches before alluded to, and recollecting that the French were almost constantly victorious, when contending against the Russians,—quære, how many men of the latter nation will have to leave Bokhara in order to arrive in India strong enough to perform more than the 50,000 French were equal to?

We have mentioned a battle, merely to show what its result might probably be; but we think that the East India government would manage ill,—which in military matters they seldom do, except when the spirit of retrenchment gets amongst them,—if, with their resources, knowledge of the country, long time for preparation, and above all, with the knowledge of the very spot where the invading army would have to *débouche*, they could not take such measures as to leave them no alternative but that of laying down their arms.

Dirom, in his account of the campaign of 1791, says, "The followers of an army in India, on being counted at four times the number of the fighting men, will appear to be a moderate estimate, on considering the particular circumstances and customs of the country." Further, "There are no towns to be depended on for supplies; and an army in India not only carries with it most of its means of subsistence for several months, but also a variety of necessaries which are exposed daily in the bazaars like merchandize at a fair: a scene resembling more the emigration of a nation, guarded by its troops, than the march of an army fitted out merely with an intention to subdue an enemy."

Allowing an invading army to be rich enough to attract

such a multitude of people, whose object, of course, is only gain, how are they to be protected,—where there is a mere line of march and no secure basis of operation,—against the *guerre de chicane* that may, and no doubt would, be carried on against the invaders from every point of the compass? These attendants would naturally fly at the approach of danger, and what could the army do without them? Let not the European *soldado* fancy, that these followers of the camp are the mere ministers of eastern luxuries; they are, in fact, so many servants only, whose labours ensure for the soldier the means of obtaining rest and food after the fatigues of the field. In other countries, soldiers can, for the most part, take care of themselves; but under the burning sun of India, they can do little more than perform their military duties; and to enable them to support even these in a climate so enervating, the means of restoring and recruiting the rapidly exhausting strength of the human frame must be constantly at hand.

Without entering into details, that would be endless, it may be safely asserted, that owing to the rapid consumption of all military *matériel*, from men to shoe-soles, no army can now carry on protracted operations when separated by distance, locality, or the enemy, from its depôts and regular sources of supply: it resembles the bough torn from the tree, that retains for a time both strength and verdure, but begins to decline from the moment it ceases to receive from the root or stem its regular proportion of nourishing juice. Such an army, to speak more professionally, is like a ball forced from one of our own engines of destruction, it begins to sink soon after it leaves the cannon's mouth, and its furious career is but a progressive declension, till, within a measured space, it falls

to the ground and remains innoxious, unless again sent forward by a fresh supply of impelling power. How, for instance, could an army, beyond the reach of regular supplies, have recovered from the situation to which, according to Dirom, Lord Cornwallis's victorious army was reduced after the opening of the campaign of 1791?

"The Mahratta armies," says that able officer, "having advanced to Seringapatam in May, 1791, later than the appointed period, their delay and other unfortunate circumstances reduced Earl Cornwallis to the necessity of destroying his battering-train, after having defeated Tippoo Sultan in a pitched battle on the 15th of that month, and obliged his Lordship to lead back his victorious army," &c. &c. "The tents and clothing were nearly worn out, the arrack as well as the rice was almost expended, and in this situation the assistance of the troops was necessary to carry back part of the intrenching tools, which it might be difficult to replace, and to drag the field-pieces and tumbrils attached to their corps; a task to which the surviving cattle were unequal in their weakly state. Great part of the horses of the cavalry were so reduced by want and fatigue, that they could no longer carry their riders, and many, unable to march, were now shot at their piquets. The ground at Caniambady, where the army had encamped but six days, was covered, in a circuit of several miles, with carcasses of cattle and horses; and the last of the gun-carriages, carts, and stores of the battering-train, left in flames, was a melancholy spectacle, which the troops passed as they left this deadly camp."

Separated by 2000 miles of precarious road from its nearest depôts, how could an army recover from such a situation in the face of practised enemies, having not only the resources of India at their command, but being per-

fectly within reach of whatever reinforcements or supplies Great Britain might be disposed to send them by a safe and uninterrupted mode of conveyance? In our own time, an isolated, and, to a certain extent even unencumbered, army can make a successful dash, or *coup de main*, at a post, fort, position, or sugar island; but against a country like India, 1500 miles in length, and 1000 in breadth, covered with strong-holds, having three capitals, each capable of standing a regular siege, and no place of vital importance to its safety, such an enterprise is entirely out of the question.

Taken as a body, the officers, civil and military, of the East India Company's service have given evidence of the highest order of talent. Whether this arises from young men starting more fairly in India than in other countries, where rank and station are alone sure passports to success, or from being called upon, at an early period of life, to exert whatever energy of character they may possess, freed in a great measure from the trammels of form and precedent, we pretend not to say; but judging from what is known to all, the fact seems indisputable. During the late Pindarree and Mahratta wars, subalterns and captains commanding detachments gave proofs of skill, promptitude and decision, that would have done honour to the highest rank; and while the Sepoys continue to be commanded by such officers, they will be equal to any troops that can be brought *against* them in India; for, however inferior they may be to European veterans in some respects, they will only be called upon to fight under circumstances most favourable to their own qualities, and least favourable to those of the invaders, who must, of course, be prepared to fight under all circumstances.

If, therefore, the civil and military officers do their duty

as ably as they have hitherto done, a European army now entering India would be exposed not merely to the army in its immediate front, but to the whole power of India, that, like the waters of the ocean, would close around and press upon the invaders from every quarter. The invading army would be encompassed by foes perfectly acquainted with the country, and having, from the very vastness of that country, a safe retreat in every direction: and however few in number on particular points, everywhere strong enough to harass, to destroy stragglers, and to keep supplies at a distance; leaving the invaders free scope to move, indeed, for they would not move far, but leaving them nothing more than the wasted ground within the reach of their arms.

And what proportion of space could the bravest and most numerous army arriving from Europe occupy on the immense peninsula of Hindostan? They would be made to pay for every defile, pass, or difficult piece of ground. If a post had to be defended, Hougomont should be the watchword,—if to be attacked, Badajoz and St. Sebastian should be the war-cry. The value of such splendid deeds of arms is not confined to the local advantages that result from them at the time; they serve as bright examples for future imitation, showing how much may be accomplished, where there is—

"The will to do, the soul to dare."

No invading army can bear up against such a system of warfare in any climate, least of all under the burning sun of India. Invaders, to be successful, must seize places of vital importance to a country; strike great and dazzling blows, to frighten the weak, bring over the wavering, and capable of intimidating all but the master spirits whom

the rocking of the world would not move from the bright path of honour and of fame. But in India, there are no places of vital importance to the safety of the whole country, nor can decisive blows be struck against a practised enemy, perfectly conscious of his strength, and who can safely delay to strike till he can strike with deadly and unerring aim; fully aware that time, by daily augmenting his force, and by diminishing that of the invaders, must in the end deliver them up bound hand and foot. Between two armies so situated there can, in fact, be no contest;—it is a false Don Quixote charging the wind-mills, not under the generous delusions that impelled the gallant knight of La Mancha, but blinded by the hope of filthy lucre.

To give to the entire undertaking a solid basis of operation, capable of securing it against the evils above mentioned, would be a gigantic enterprise, placed altogether beyond the bounds of ordinary speculations. It would require the military occupation of a line of country, secured in the rear, extending almost from the wall of China to the frontiers of Persia, and demanding at least two or three hundred thousand men for its protection. Distant and unbased inroads into the territory of a strong and enlightened enemy are now worse than precarious, for their only chance of success rests on the weakness or ignorance of the invaded; a foundation too uncertain to be built upon in war. The successful inroads made by the French armies under Napoleon, only prove that his enemies were more ignorant of the true principles of the deadly game at which they were playing, than he was himself; and the first time he was resisted—the very first time his enemies refused to yield to his summons, his failure—from causes that admitted

before-hand of as evident demonstration as the simplest proposition in Euclid,—was so complete, that but for the hold his reputation has got upon the minds of men, his name, as a soldier, would be held up to scorn and derision.

To put this matter fairly at issue, in every point of view, let us suppose that the invaders of India commence that vast undertaking by the establishment of a proper basis of operation; for, with time, men, and money, there is, of course, nothing impossible. And let us then see what might be the result of the enterprise, supposing Great Britain, as in duty bound, disposed to fight out the battle with British steel and British spirit, instead of yielding to the clamour that would, no doubt, be raised against any brave determination to retain our most valuable possession, and to uphold the honour of the country.

Considering the distance, the difficulties of the roads, the delays that the constant want of supplies would occasion, it is not likely that Russia could obtain fair military possession of the countries bordering upon India, in less than six or eight years from the time of our being made acquainted with the attempt; so that we should, of course, have the same space of time for preparation. Britain had, in 1814, besides 20,000 men in India, armies actually opposed to the enemy in Spain, Sicily, Holland, and Canada, and might, in far less than four years' time, have an equal number again at her disposal. Of these, 40,000 or more might, if necessary, be transported to India by a sure mode of conveyance, making, when joined to those already in that country, 60,000 British, who, added to 120,000 natives, would give exactly three times the force that gained the battle of Talavera, against 50,000 tried and experienced French troops. So that allowing the Russians

to be equal to the French, which they have never proved themselves to be, it would require more than 150,000 Russians to contend successfully against such an army; that is, Russia would have to bring a stronger army into India than she was able to bring into the field of Borodino for the defence of Moscow, when the fate of the empire was at stake: she would have to bring ten times the number of men across the Indus that she was able to carry across the Balkan to Adrianople. Where then is the prospect of our being over-matched on the plains of Hindostan?

We are here putting an extreme case, that we never expect to see realized, merely to show the relative power of the parties if disposed to exert themselves to the utmost. But, if the battle is ever to be fought, let us at once throw away the purse-strings and the scabbard:—make any sacrifice consistent with national honour and security, to avoid drawing the sword; but when once determined upon, away with all half-measures, and, above all, with that penny wisdom which, in military matters, invariably leads to pound folly. Let any one attempt to calculate how many millions of treasure, and how many thousands of gallant lives might have been spared, had 25,000 such British soldiers as those who, in 1815, decided the fate of Europe on the plain of Waterloo, aided by the same allies who fought by our side in 1793, taken the field at the outset of the contest, when the French troops were but a weak and disorganized rabble, compared to the tried and victorious bands of later times! The mournful balance of blood that must appear against the system then pursued, should at least act as a warning against its repetition; that balance, the interest of which the nation is yet paying in tears and treasure, is surely heavy enough to convince the most incre-

dulous, how little was gained by being without an army, without military pride and confidence,—and, above all, without that high and commanding military character, policy, and decision that are now almost synonymous with national independence.

We have endeavoured to show, that an army invading India would first have to perform a march which, judging from all we know at present, no European army could accomplish in an efficient state; that it would next have to pass a river, or succession of rivers, and a mountain-barrier, forming obstacles of such magnitude, that the chances would be any where against their successful execution; that it would then have to encounter, on their own ground and on their own terms, enemies, against whom the pages of history, if fairly viewed, record but one defeat, and not a single instance of deviation from honour or from duty; and would ultimately, in its isolated state, have to carry on war against any force Great Britain might be disposed to send out, or keep efficient in India. Without saying that any one of these operations is impossible, we may venture to assert, that they are all, as individual operations, of sufficient difficulty to make even the boldest pause. Yet they have all to be performed in succession,—the successful performance of each lessening, in a fearful degree, the means of undertaking the next. Where then is the ground to hope that all can be successfully performed? But as "fools will rush in where angels fear to tread," it is right to be prepared for every emergency.

In saying nothing of the expense that might attend an overland attack on India, we may be accused of omitting the most important part of the subject, since "'Tis gold, not steel, that rears the conqueror's arch." The truth is,

that we have too few data on which to form an accurate judgment; but in 1809, the Duke of Wellington estimated the expenses of his army, which did not then exceed 20,000 men, at 200,000*l.* per month, (independent, of course, of all the stores that came from England;) and as the actual pay formed but a small item of this sum, every one may judge of the expense of keeping armies in the field. Of the Russian finances, though generally understood to be in a fair condition, little is known, for the statement laid annually before a committee of noblemen and gentlemen at Petersburg proves nothing whatever, the parties present being only allowed to say, "We have seen," and to make their bow. This partial display holds out no very great promise, and very wealthy nations only can now carry on distant military expeditions at their own expense. As to the expense of moving a Russian army, it must, like the movement of all other armies, depend in a great measure on circumstances and situation. And, though the pay of all ranks is very small, yet that pay doubles the moment they cross the Russian frontier.

To reason with those, who, like many worthy people on the Continent, fancy that an army has only to enter India, in order to be at once ankle deep in gold-dust and pearls, is, of course, entirely out of the question: for, if there is any one thing more certain than another, it is that the invaders of India would not get one single rupee or pagoda till they were masters *in* the country; till then, they would have to depend on their own roubles, that had better be in plenty, for every thing in India, from the service of an army to a pound of rice, is estimated according to its value in gold, and tendered in exact proportion to the promptness of payment. If any part of the foregoing statement seems

to insinuate that little will be got for money, it may be safely taken for granted that still less will be got for love.

Independently of all commercial and pecuniary considerations, a great moral obligation imposes on Britain the defence of the institutions and the numerous population that have sprung up under her dominion in India. As long as the millions who, under our government, have been born to an inheritance of peace and security, shall be unable to govern and protect themselves,—and, from the nature of Indian character and manners, a long period must elapse before that time shall arrive,—they are as much entitled to our protection as the child in its years of weakness is entitled to the protection of its parents. The performance of this duty should now force upon the government of India, not only the occupation of Attock, but also of Caubul and Cashmere. Such a measure would bring peace to those distracted countries, and would give us strong and valuable possessions in advance of, and at the head of the Indus; whilst the first sight of that river and of the land of promise, should present to the view of the invaders, Attock, raised to the rank of a first-rate fortress, prepared to relieve them of some of the fiery valour, strength, and *matériel* that might still happen to encumber them after a thousand miles of march across the *steppes* and mountains of Central Asia.

If the citadel of Antwerp, a fortress of strength, but not of the first order, situated within five easy marches of Valenciennes, withstood 75,000 French and 130 pieces of artillery for thirty-two days, (dating from the investment,) and was then surrendered before even a single breach had been made practicable; how long might a first-rate fortress resist an army arriving from Russia, after a march of *two*

seasons, and having to bring all its stores and artillery from the same distance! If Acre, on the coast of Syria, the ill-constructed works of which were half in ruins, resisted all the efforts of the French army of Egypt; on what grounds can we suppose that a Russian army could capture a first-rate fortress on the Indus?

Frederick II., in speaking of the war in America to Mr. Mitchell, the English ambassador, said—"*C'est une chose effrayante que d'être obligé de faire la guerre, même près de chez soi; mais si l'armée est au bout du monde, ah! Monsieur, croyez-en un vieux practicien, pourvoir cette armée de tout ce qu'il lui faut, c'est le chef-d'œuvre de la prudence humaine.*" In this respect we perfectly agree with his Majesty, and never expect to see human prudence displayed in an overland invasion of India.

Great and distant enterprises of this nature could only be contemplated when armies were composed of men formidable from their training, energy, and skill in the use of efficient arms, capable of performing great actions, without the aid of monster-mortars. They could only be performed at a time when genius, and not fortune, ruled the fate of battles; when noble deeds were nobly rewarded; when statues were raised to the memory of the brave who fell, and crowns of gold placed, by universal acclamation, on the brows of the surviving victors. But in our days no such armies have been organized. Soldiers are trained only to the unskilful loading and firing of a clumsy musket; poverty and neglect forming the sole reward of toils and wounds. Such men can merely make short incursions from their ships, or carry on war in neighbouring countries possessing roads fit for the conveyance of huge war-engines, and where requisitions and the *kantchu* can collect the necessary supplies.

It is only after years of bloodshed, and waste of treasure, when hunger and disease have caused more destruction than the sword, that results are effected by armies so composed:—they either frighten or exhaust an enemy; but they possess not the power of striking mighty blows, capable of levelling, at once, the most formidable adversaries, and of restoring peace to humanity and serenity to the political atmosphere, as the summer sky is cleared and cooled by the bursting of the thunder-cloud and the passing away of the storm.

"As coming events cast their shadows before,"

there is much that seems to indicate the approaching dissolution of the East India Company's government. Though we have, for the present, nothing to do with such speculations, we cannot conclude this article without offering our tribute of admiration to the great things they have performed in their day. Their power and dominion augmented with a rapidity that far exceeded the rise and progress of Rome itself; because, unlike the destroyers of Carthage, Corinth and Numantia, they made victory every where subservient to the cause of mercy and humanity. Whether they have effected all the good that lay in their power, it is impossible to say; but they substituted safety for violence, anarchy and bloodshed. Their rule has conferred the blessings of peace on a hundred millions of people, and brought with it that protection for persons and property never before known in India: and, if the simple fact is inscribed on their monument, they may safely defy the records of mankind to produce a nobler epitaph.

ON THE POWER AND POSITION OF RUSSIA.

"We must prevent the subjugation of the Continent, before we are reduced to depend on a narrow sea, as the only safeguard of our liberty; for it is a mere delusion to suppose, that a mighty empire will be unable to raise fleets wherewith to attack us, if it is once firmly established along the shores of the ocean."

Gustavus Adolphus: in his farewell address to the States of Sweden, on embarking for the German expedition.

THE most important political question on which modern times have to decide, is the policy that must now be pursued, in order to maintain the security of Western Europe against the overgrown power of Russia: a power that hangs in threatening darkness over the west, as the thunder cloud of the tropics hangs over the lands destined to feel the fury of the desolating tornado. It would be useless to speculate on the means which the nations of the continent should adopt for mutual protection;—few are willing to see the danger to which they are exposed: some are blinded by petty local interests; some by jealousy of nearer neighbours, and those that are sufficiently enlightened to perceive the gathering storm, either want the strength or energy, necessary for the adoption of efficient measures. Russia has also many friends on the continent: none of the

continental presses, that of France perhaps excepted, dare print a single syllable against the views or interests of the autocrat; on this point the censorship is extremely severe; —so that the most despotic government in Europe enjoys, in fact, a high character for liberality. Every wise and generous measure of the cabinet of Petersburg,—and under so able and enlightened a monarch as the present Emperor many such measures are adopted,—is extolled to the skies; while the countless acts of tyranny and oppression, committed by the government and its functionaries, and which without the aid of a free press, no absolute sovereign can possibly control, are naturally buried in darkness and oblivion.

The shares of the Polish spoil, still held by Austria and Prussia, combine, to a certain extent, the interests of those powers with that of Russia; while in France, where political wisdom and morality are at the lowest possible ebb, Russia is popular because she is looked upon as the natural enemy of England. "*Nous n'avons rien a esperer de l'alliance Anglaise,*" is a common saying on the other side of the Channel. "*Mais pour la permision de prendre Constantinople, la Russie nous donnera la rive gauche du Rhin.*"

Britain must therefore look to her own exertions: if, in the hour of trial, we are found strong and determined, the good cause will bring us friends and allies; if, on the other hand, we are found weak and wavering, prepared only with protocols instead of arms, we shall be left to fight the battle single handed; even if we do not see the continent arrayed against us under the banner of Russia, as we formerly saw it arrayed under that of France.

As a knowledge of the past can alone enable us to

judge of the future; it will be right to begin this enquiry by a brief review of the conduct which Russia has pursued since she became a great military power.

History informs us, that the Macedonians first entered the Peloponnesus as friends; that the Romans, in like manner, made their first appearance on the classic soil of Greece, in the character of allies; and we know, that in the last age, those entered Poland as pacificators, who remained to drown the independence of the country, in the blood and tears of its oppressed and slaughtered children. As these events, to which a long list of minor instances of unprincipled ambition might be added, not only reduced mighty nations to slavery, and changed, in a great measure, the fate of Europe, but placed the comparatively free and enlightened at the mercy of the barbarian and the despot, —it may be well, as we have already seen a Russian armament in friendly occupation of the Dardanelles, to take a brief view of the conduct of that power since it first emerged from darkness: such a view will aid us to form some estimate of what the world has to expect from the future conduct and augmenting force of so dangerous an empire.

The last age saw Russia occupy Livonia, Courland, Georgia, Bessarabia, the Crimea, and part of Poland: the present has, with equal apathy, beheld her unprincipled seizure of Finland, and the rest of Poland; to say nothing of an endless number of Asiatic provinces, annexed to her empire, in open and direct violation of the promise made to Europe at the commencement of the war of 1828, that Russia would seek no territorial aggrandizement as the result of the contest.

What then, let us ask, is the next age to behold? Or,

as aggressions of this sort generally go on with an accelerated ratio, what is the present age itself still destined to behold, now that Russia is in command, if not yet in actual possession, of the Dardanelles, and can bring all the resources of her mighty empire to bear as easily upon the south, as she formerly could upon the north of Europe? Some parties will tell us that the acquisition of Turkey, the first step in the march of future conquest, must encumber, rather than strengthen Russia; that knowledge, which is fast spreading through her *steppes*, will, in itself, tend to weaken her power; that her ambition will be satisfied with the acquisition of Constantinople; and, finally, that her vast and overgrown empire must, in the end, fall to pieces by its own weight.

Vain and miserable delusions, capable only of imposing on the ignorant and unreflecting! How the acquisition of some of the noblest provinces in Europe, together with the finest naval station in the world, should weaken a power like Russia, it would be difficult to show; nor is it easy to comprehend why knowledge, truly deemed synonymous with strength every where else, must enfeeble the Muscovites. Equally erroneous is the assertion, for belief we cannot call it, that Russia must fall to pieces by the weight of her own greatness, and break into separate states, totally independent of each other, by the effects of internal revolution. What changes centuries may bring about in the situation of Europe, or of the world at large, it would be idle to speculate upon; but the coward alone throws down his arms, trusting that Providence will, some time or other, do justice to the cause which it was his duty to uphold, but which he wants the courage to defend. There have already been many revolutions in Russia: it

has even been doubted whether a single Russian sovereign, since the time of Peter the Great, has died a natural death; and there may, no doubt, be many more such revolutions. But they have been only so many *révolutions du palais*; that have led to a change of rulers, indeed, but never occasioned any change in the general policy of the empire; unless when they spurred on a new Czar, as in the case of the present Emperor, to fresh aggressions on his neighbours, for the purpose of beginning his reign with all the *éclat* of victory and of conquest.

It is easy to perceive in the American Commonwealth the seeds of disunion, owing to the equal degree of power possessed by different states, who, from a difference of situation, soil, property, and produce, have, naturally, different interests. But in Russia, we look in vain for any cause capable of bringing about a separation of the various provinces that compose the empire. Old Russia, or Russia Proper, forms the nucleus of the great Russian power; the conquered provinces are so many attached bodies only, having no mutual interest or connexion with each other, beyond what they derive through the medium of Russia itself. No concert in shaking off the yoke is therefore to be expected from them; and they are, individually, as we have lately seen in the melancholy case of Poland, far too weak to make head against the whole Russian power. This is saying nothing of the amalgamation that, owing to the prudent conduct of the cabinet of St. Petersburg, is constantly going on between the inhabitants of the different provinces. The natives of the countries that have been long subdued are already zealous Russians.

As to the Muscovites being satisfied with the acquisition of Turkey, when that long-anticipated robbery shall have

been effected, let us ask when was ambition, and above all, the ambition of conquest, ever yet satisfied?

The love of conquest is an "appetite that grows with what it feeds upon," whether in republics or in monarchies. Indolent and unwarlike sovereigns have sometimes, indeed, kept monarchical states at rest; yet is the accession of a young prince, ambitious of military fame, a pretty sure signal of strife: whilst no republic has ever remained quiet within arm's-length of an adversary who could be assailed with the least prospect of success. On what ground are we then to suppose that Russia, the most ambitious power the world has beheld since the fall of the Roman empire, is to constitute an exception? If we cannot discover the slightest ground for expecting she will prove an exception, then, bearing in mind her long course of aggression, let us ask, what has Europe to expect from her future conduct? If we say peace and good-will alone, we cannot assign the shadow of a reason for our assertion, and must speak in the face of all history and experience. If, on the contrary, we say that the world has only insult, oppression, and ultimate subjugation to expect at her hands, then we have, not only the conduct of Russia herself, but every page of human history, from its earliest records down to the friendly occupation of Constantinople, to bear us out.

True it is that we very modestly term the age in which we live the age of intellect *par excellence*,—that we shut our eyes to the wisdom handed down to us by preceding generations, whenever it tells against any of the favourite theories of the day, or against the rallying party-phrases that now become established maxims by the mere force of repetition, and by the aid of invectives, so liberally heaped upon those who attempt to expose the

poor sophistry so generally contained in these shallow sentences. But where, after all, is the great moral, or political, truth that we have discovered, or the influence of which we have extended? What is the name that this boasted age can add to the list of warriors, statesmen, and philosophers,—the great thinkers of the human race,—men whose vigour of intellect has shed light on the character, destiny, and relative position of man, as well as on many of the hidden mysteries of nature; and who, by giving us so high a standard of the reach of thought, have enabled us easily to measure the pretensions of ordinary littleness? Forgetful, also, of the natural progress of knowledge, and, above all, of the progress of the mechanical sciences, we boast of our knowledge as if it were exclusively due to our own exertions,—thus overlooking the accumulated information we have inherited. It is as if the miserable insect that builds along the upper ridges of the coral-reef were to claim, as its own work, the whole of the mighty mass, raised in the course of ages by the labour of millions of millions of its fellow worms from the fathomless depths of the ocean.

Some have been deceived into a belief that Russia is not a very formidable military power, because she occasionally brought but small armies into the field when contending against the Turks. Evil-boding belief, fraught with future disaster; for, to undervalue an adversary's force, proves but too often the certain forerunner of defeat. Such delusions generally originate in that species of mental cowardice which makes us undervalue danger when distant, as an excuse for not preparing against its approach; and, ultimately, leads us to exaggerate the same danger when near, as an apology for ready and immediate submission.

Russia is rich in men, and rich enough in means to arm

and equip them; but she is not rich enough in money to support, at her own expense, large armies engaged in distant expeditions. Russia has an effective movable army of 700,000 men, regulars and irregulars,—called 1,100,000,—always at her disposal. How many of these can be brought into the field, must, of course, depend upon circumstances. Count Bismark, who lately went to Russia, on a special invitation from the Emperor to come and see the army,—says that His Majesty can, at any time, bring upwards of 300,000 men, with 500 pieces of cannon into a field of battle. The Count is, avowedly, a man of abilities: he is also a General, and served under Napoleon, and therefore looked upon as high authority in all such matters; but, like many other men of high authority, he sometimes overlooks very important points when they tell against opinions, formed under an overwhelming shower of stars, jewels, decorations, and other splendid marks of Imperial friendship and favour;—and he forgets on this occasion, that to parade thousands, in good home quarters, and to parade them on a distant battle-field are altogether different things. In Turkey, and in poor and thinly peopled Asiatic countries to the eastward of her own frontier, where the war must be maintained by the aid of resources sent from her own territory, Russia is comparatively weak, and that weakness naturally augments in proportion to the distance at which operations must be carried on. Her strength lies in Europe, to the westward of her own frontier, in wealthy countries, where war can be made to support the war; and her power, which is but an unsubstantial shadow on the distant Indus, is tremendous from the Vistula to the very shores of the Tagus.

The Russian soldier possesses no great energy, activity,

or individual intelligence, and wants, indeed, all the higher warlike qualities; but he is blindly obedient to his chiefs, and has enough of steadiness and passive courage to make him a good tactical soldier, that is, a good walking-target and shooting-machine. The modern system of tactics seems almost to have been devised for the benefit of Russia, so well is it suited to the character of her people.

The Russian cavalry, though well-mounted, is but indifferent, because, in the cavalry, much depends upon the individual spirit and energy of the soldier,—qualities in which, besides being bad horsemen, the Russians are deficient. They never ventured to face the Turkish cavalry till the Moslems had been drilled down to the level of modern tactics, by the aid of French and Italian officers. The Russian infantry, on the other hand, is firm under fire, and always maintained, if not a successful, at least an honourable contest against the best of Napoleon's troops. It was only when the old Janizaries got in among them, sword in hand, that the pipe-clay tacticians, who wished to retain their heads, wisely resorted to the use of their heels, instead of resorting to the use of modern arms.

The Russian artillery is very numerous, and in good order; though most English officers think the horses rather slight for the work they have to perform. In the Allied army, the officers of this artillery, as well as those of the engineer and quarter-master-general's department, were considered as more pedantic than scientific,—on what exact grounds, we pretend not to know. Of the men generally, it may be said, that they are neither strong nor hardy, in proportion to their size; for the numbers who perished from sickness and fatigue, in some of the Moldavian campaigns, were, according to Manstein and other

respectable writers, who had opportunities of judging, almost incredible. The men are not well made about the knees, and are bad marchers; the natural consequence of their country being covered with snow during one half of the year, and being little better than a swamp during two-thirds of the remainder. A Russian military hospital is in general but the first step towards "a cool, cool grave." The supplies of every kind furnished to the soldiers are wretched; and boundless corruption is the order of the day in every department of their military administration.

But numbers, system, and obedience make up, in a great measure, for these defects; and in 1815, the officers of the British staff saw nearly 200,000 Russians, of whom 28,000 were cavalry, with 300 pieces of artillery, all in the most perfect state of discipline and equipment, paraded before the assembled kings, princes, and ministers of Europe on the plains of Vertus. The spectacle should have made more impression than it seems to have done: for though Russia was then aided by British subsidies, it was still at the end of a three years' war, that had ruined her resources, laid waste the central provinces of her empire, and caused her capital to be destroyed; losses that naturally very much outweighed all the assistance that we could afford. When the Muscovites shall be in actual possession of Constantinople, they will be able, by means of the rivers that descend from the heart of their dominions into the Black Sea, to collect all their forces, in perfect security, along the shores of the Dardanelles, in order to hurl them, whenever it may suit their convenience, against the southern countries of Europe.

The western provinces of Turkey, except those which, in the scramble, may fall into the hands of Austria, will of

course follow the fate of the capital. The same will be the case with the islands of the Archipelago; for we shall, of course, be too much occupied with our party feuds,—with striving for places and commissionerships, to attend much to the interest of the nation. Established along the shores of the Adriatic, Russia will soon be required to settle the affairs of Italy, as she settled the affairs of Poland. With Asia Minor under her guns, she must, of course, become the arbitress of all the little Mahomedan states into which that country will split on the fall of Constantinople. Russian Commercial Ukases will therefore be law from Alexandria to Cattaro in the Upper Adriatic. Mistress of the Black Sea, in possession of all the splendid naval stations of the Levant, she cannot fail to become a maritime power of first-rate magnitude: for Greece, under whatever sovereign it may be placed, will be about as independent of Russia, as the kingdom of the Isle of Man would be independent of Great Britain.

These dangers, we shall be told, are too distant to be speculated upon: and it is very certain that they may never come to pass; we do not know what fate has in store for either Christian or Mahomedan nations; but a great people should depend on their strength and resources and not upon chance. The events which are now visibly in progress, naturally bring the dangers here specified in their train: the barrier which arrested the march of Russia towards the south, can no longer resist the mighty pressure, and it is easy to fortel the direction which the torrent will take, when all the safe-guards of the land have yielded to its fury. This is laying no stress on the skill and ability supposed to have been displayed by Russian diplomacy: and though it would be the height of injustice to accuse a govern-

ment of a succession of treacherous intrigues, calculated only to advance projects of national aggrandizement; it must be allowed that many of the revolutions which have occasionally disturbed the world during the last hundred years, were singularly well timed for the advancement of Russian power. The troubles and divisions in Poland that first led to friendly intervention, and then to the subjugation of the country: the mutiny in the Swedish army under Gustavus III., which saved Petersburg; and the poisonous remnants of which led ultimately to the murder of that high-minded monarch: the claim of independence, set up by the Tartars, and supported by Russia against the Turks, which led to the subsequent conquest of the Crimea: the Servian insurrection under Zerny-George: the revolution in Sweden, that placed a foreigner, dependent on the good will of Russia, on the throne of the Vasas, and almost reduced the Scandinavian peninsula to a Russian province: the Greek revolution, that served as a pretext for the war of 1828, and completely broke the power of Turkey; and lastly, the insurrection of Mahomet Ali of Egypt, that occasioned the friendly occupation of the Dardanelles, and the treaty which has placed the navigation of those straits, entirely at the mercy of Russia, were all, to say the least, singular instances of good fortune. Let us now examine, therefore, what appear the best means of securing our country against the progress of a nation which, in its unexampled career of aggression, is so strongly favoured by the power of chance, or the skill of its agents.

If Moldavia and Wallachia could be given to Austria, it would go far towards settling the point in an amicable manner, as it would interpose the strong arm of a great

military power, between Turkey and her grasping neighbour. The Sultan would probably be willing enough to exchange, for very valuable protection, provinces that yield little benefit. The money-claim that we have on the Austrian government, and which is never likely to be paid us, might be given over to the Sultan in return for his unproductive territory. As Russia would not, however, agree to a project that would interfere with her plans, and as the cabinets of Europe want the firmness to enforce it, we must see what other means of safety are still left at our disposal.

If Turkey is to be defended against Russia, it must be with the aid of Christian fleets, and armies; and thus supported, the Moslems would probably make a more determined resistance than is generally believed. In personal bravery they yield to no men in Europe; and though the modern system of tactics has, no doubt, injured their efficiency as soldiers, they would still, by the aid of a foreign force,—capable of giving unity and a proper impulse and direction to their operations,—become formidable defenders of a rugged and intersected country. A double line of fortresses would be necessary to give proper consistency to the defence;—the first might consist of Widdin, Rudshuck, Silistria, Schumla, and Varna; the second of Burgas, Ennos, Galiopoli, and Adrianople, with protecting works and lines, to secure the capital in case of extremity. How bravely the Turks have always defended their ill-armed, and worse-constructed fortresses, is well known; Schumla was never even taken: so that the best results might be expected from the defence of works raised and put in a state of preparation by European officers of skill and experience. To advance between these fortresses,—the sea in

possession of the defenders, flanks exposed to insult on every point, the line of communication lengthening and weakening by every march,—would be an undertaking fraught with ten chances of failure for every one of success. Constantinople itself should be protected by a line of works, constructed on the principle of the lines of Torres Vedras: they would arrest the progress of the invaders, while the sea and the Dardanelles would keep open the communication with all the provinces not in the hands of the enemy; and for such a method of defence, Constantinople is even better situated than Lisbon. Simple field works, supported from distance to distance by *martello* towers,—which, though they throw out no great flanking fire, are easily defended,—would probably be sufficient security against any army that could reach the shores of the Bosphorus.

To begin the invasion by a regular siege of the different, or most important fortresses, would require, what might be termed preparatory campaigns, which should not be lost to the defenders, considering how valuable time is in war. To mask the strong-holds, while the main body of the invaders advanced towards the capital, would greatly augment the difficulty of finding supplies, and require a force vastly superior to any that Russia has ever been able to bring across the Danube: vastly superior indeed, to any that, judging from all we know, can be supported in European Turkey without the aid of maritime conveyance. The country is poor, thinly inhabited and ill cultivated,—it is every where intersected with rivers, woods, mountains; and presents, in fact, far more than any European country, obstacles to the invaders, and advantages to the defenders.

When the Russian fleet was in command of the Black Sea. Diebitsch brought fewer than ten thousand half-

starved soldiers to Adrianople, where they could have effected nothing, had not the Turks been discouraged by the conduct of the European courts, and by the exertion of the corps diplomatique at Constantinople. These enlightened statesmen, instead of taking part with the weak against the strong, sided with the aggressors, and used all their mischievous influence to make the Sultan submit, when victory was already within his reach. That is, victory over the army with which Diebitsch dictated the peace of Adrianople; what the result of a prolonged contest might have been, is, of course, a different question.

If the Russians, when in possession of Varna, and in command of the Black Sea and Mediterranean, only brought ten thousand men to Adrianople in the second campaign of the wars, how many would they bring beyond the Balkan if the British were in possession of Varna, and acting, by means of their naval superiority, against the flanks of the invading army, both from the Black Sea and the Mediterranean? The Russians having once found their way beyond the Balkan is, no doubt, in their favour; but even the knowledge acquired by their last campaign would be far from balancing the weight that a small British armament would throw into the scale in favour of the defenders. Such an armament would not only render the Turks masters of the sea; its very appearance would give a moral force to their efforts, that would more than treble all the resources of their empire.

To be prepared with this necessary aid, Britain should immediately acquire possession of Candia and possibly of Egypt also. Little as would be the resistance, if any, that we should experience in occupying these valuable countries; yet, as it could only be effected by employing a mili-

tary force, we do not anticipate a very favourable reception for our plan, at a time when the very name and glitter of arms make unconquered Britain shake through her hundred states,—affording merriment alike to those whom our victories raised, as to those whom we subdued; for well, indeed, has the cant of liberalism and philanthropy avenged the cause of the vanquished world.

But what, it may be asked, are the grounds on which we recommend a measure so completely at variance with all the reigning maxims of political wisdom? They are easily stated. The occupation of Candia would give us a position that completely commands the Levant,—that would be impregnable in our hands,—and one that affords, from its natural wealth, population, and productiveness, ample resources in war, as well as openings for trade in time of peace. Egypt, on the other hand, would not only place at our disposal the wealth and resources of that unhappy country, but would enable us to open a communication, by canal or rail-road, between the Nile and the Red Sea, so as to shorten the road to India, and thus to bring our valuable possessions in that quarter to the very threshhold of our European dominions. What, above all, is important at this moment,—the acquisition of such fertile countries would throw open a vast field for the employment of the dormant capital of this country, as well as for the exertion of the repressed energies of our population.

Let it not be said that we have plenty of colonies already, for we have none that at present afford these advantages. India, independent of its being a monopoly, has its own capitalists and artisans. Of the West Indies it is painful to speak, since modern philanthropy has ruined the white population of the islands, in the vain hope of improv-

ing the blacks. Canada and New South Wales afford only subsistence, as a reward for the personal labour of those who are wealthy enough to get there, but hold out no wide field for the joint exertion of capital and industry, and this is exactly what the country wants.

The numerous class of political reasoners, who only take what the Germans would call "a one-sided view" of a question, will, no doubt, object to the acquisition of additional colonies, on the ground, that those which we already possess cost us more than they produce. If we look to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's budget for any great revenue under the head of colonies, this may at first seem to be the case; but it will be much altered, if we ask what tends to augment so many other branches of the revenue? What, but colonial trade, has raised Glasgow and Liverpool to their present state of prosperity? Half of Cheltenham and Bath, together with a great part of Brighton, have been built by fortunes made in the colonies. A vast proportion of the villas that cover the face of the country, owe their origin to the same source; and many a proud aristocratic castle has been saved from ruin, particularly in Scotland, by the loving aid of some nabob's daughter. The value of an Indian heiress is as well known to the fortune-hunting mothers of the north, as to any one of the lady-patronesses of the Beauty Bazaar at Almack's.

It is not the reduction of a few clerks, soldiers, sailors, and dock-yard labourers, that can benefit the nation at large; but an opening for exertion, and the means of obtaining a due reward for honourable toil. The constant call for retrenchment and reduction, in order to obtain for the people a relief from taxation, is little more than the watch-cry of faction. Just economy in the expenditure of

the public revenue is, no doubt, a duty on the part of Government; but everything like meanness is not only injurious to the service itself, but hurtful to the general prosperity of the country at large. Taxes to the amount of nearly forty millions a-year have been taken off since the peace; hundreds of thousands of persons have in consequence been reduced,—some to the miserable pittance of half-pay or retired allowances, and others to absolute penury: but who, except stock-holders and regular stock-speculators, have been benefited by the mighty additions thus made to the mass of general poverty? Certainly not a single individual in the empire, of whatever class, who is forced to gain a livelihood by labour or industry.

If you reduce a thousand men to-morrow, you not only expose those men and their families to want, or comparative want, without perceptibly amending the condition of any living creature, but you abridge the comfort of some five, six, or perhaps ten thousand other individuals, that will be forced to resign part of their labour or profit to these discharged men, who must naturally become competitors for a share in the general means of support. Still is the system proceeding, and reduction continues to be the cry, while not a single voice is raised to propose or advocate some great national plan, worthy of our former fame, and capable of giving relief and calling forth the exertions of our people. Has Providence endowed the natives of these islands with boundless energies; has it given to our arms uncontrolled command of the ocean and unconquered might on the land; placed us, in fact, at the head of the civilized world, merely in order that the wounds inflicted by the repressed buoyancy of national power and individual character, might furnish themes for the harangues of spouting patriots, and whining economists?

A few words more to prove the value of the countries it is here proposed that Britain should acquire.

Candia—the "κρήτεν ἑκατόμπολιν," or "Crete of the Hundred Cities" of Homer—is a hundred and eighty miles in length, but comparatively narrow in breadth, and contains about four thousand square miles. It is traversed from east to west by a range of lofty hills, in the centre of which Ida, with all its groves and fame, rises to the height of seven thousand two hundred feet above the level of the sea. The productions of Crete were famous in the ancient world; and many of them still retain their former reputation. "Whatever grows in Crete," says Pliny (xxv. 8), "is far superior in quality to the same kind of produce raised in other countries." The population, that once amounted to millions,—Homer (Od. xix. 172) calls it "countless,"—is now estimated at little more than two hundred and forty thousand inhabitants, one half of whom are Greeks and the other half Turks.

The island has several fine bays and harbours, the best of which are those of Dia, Suda, Spinalonga, and Mirabello; of inferior excellence, but capable of being improved, are those of Kania, Rettino, Settia, and Selino. The natural wealth and resources of Candia may easily be judged of by its ancient power and greatness, as it sent eighty ships with ten thousand men to the siege of Troy. How flourishing must have been the country that, in so remote an age, could fit out an armament of this magnitude, it is needless to say. That Crete afterwards fell from its high estate, and did not share in the subsequent greatness and glory of Greece, was owing to the liberal reformers of the island, who preached up a system of non-intervention that naturally confined all the energies of the people within the

narrow limits of their island. These enlightened statesmen also took upon themselves to reform the laws of Minos, and thus led the way for the Agitators and Repealers,—men who, in order to be great upon a little stage, brought about a separation of the states or cities, and thus handed over their beautiful country to the fury of factions, to the rapacity of Asiatic pirates, and ultimately to the chains of all-conquering Rome; a power as grasping as Russia, but whose ambition was gilded, if not atoned for, by the lofty courage, character, and high intellect of her people,—qualities to which her modern rival can oppose little more than the cunning rapacity natural to all the branches of the Tartar race.

On the decline of the Roman empire, Crete, like many other provinces, was successively ravaged by Saracens and Franks. The island revived under the Venetians, to whom it was sold in the thirteenth century, and long constituted the principal source from whence that celebrated republic derived her strength and power. It was taken by the Turks in 1669; and from its capture may be dated the downfall of Venice, which never recovered the blow.

Little can here be said of Egypt, and of the countries farther south, that a wise and peaceable government would soon bring under its sway. Of the Alpine districts, in which the Nile takes its rise, not much is known; but from the place where the river begins to be navigable, that is, from the neighbourhood of Eloe and Elephantina, to below Dendara, its banks are covered with a succession of architectural ruins that, in point of numbers, greatness, height of finish, and in the rock-like durability which has enabled them to withstand the ravages of so many centuries, take the first rank amongst all those existing on the surface of

the globe; giving ample proofs that they were raised by a great, wealthy, powerful, civilized, and united people.

Herodotus tells us that when the full elevation of the Nile gave the signal for general rejoicing, more than seven hundred thousand men and women might be seen sailing in barks round the towns and villages that, like the islands of the Cyclades, rose from the midst of the surrounding waters; and this was without including even a great part of what we now call Upper and Lower Egypt. Why, then, let us ask, should not a country possessing such mighty resources, and forming, as it were, the connecting link between India and Europe, be again blessed with a government capable of calling those resources to light, by bestowing on the natives security for person and property?—blessings that have probably not been known on the banks of the Nile since the time of the Roman invasion, and not to be expected from a Turkish Pacha, whose reign is precarious, and who, however enlightened he may be for a man of his class, must necessarily oppress and grind down the people in order to keep up the army, indispensable to the maintenance of his own sway.

Mehemet Ali rules by the iron hand of power alone; and is, in fact, more cordially hated by his soldiers and subjects than any eastern despot whose memory is on record. His boasted improvements are not of a nature to outlive him; for canals and manufactories must result from knowledge, industry, and civilization, and are ill suited to a barbarous people, inhabiting a country where there is neither credit, confidence, nor security for property of any kind. Thousands of the hundred thousand miserable wretches who were marched down under military escort to labour at the canal of Alexandria, perished from actual

want and hunger during the progress of that boasted work, which was no sooner finished than it was again allowed to go to ruin, and is already, we believe, perfectly useless. Such are the wonders enacted by the liberal despotism of the East.

What may be the present revenue of Egypt, it is difficult to say. Brown estimated the amount, at a time when a great part of Upper Egypt was in open rebellion against the tyranny of the Beys, at about two millions and a half sterling, annually; and when the celebrated Hassan Pacha restored the country to the dominion of the Porte, in 1790, he was supposed to have secured for the treasury of the Sultan an additional yearly revenue of four millions sterling. How much more might not such a country be expected to yield under a liberal and enlightened government, possessing, from its exterior resources, sufficient strength to be both just and equitable? Of the inhabitants of Egypt about one-half are called Christians, whilst the other half are Mahometans, far more tolerant than the followers of the Prophet are generally believed to be; and both sects equally anxious for the protection of an European government. By the people we should therefore be viewed as friends; and were this wealthy and productive country once in our possession, the whole of its large revenue would necessarily flow directly into the British treasury, for a very small force would be sufficient for its garrison, as it is defended by seas, and by deserts even more difficult for modern armies to traverse than any seas whatever: it has, besides, only one long line of communication, the Nile, between its different and most distant provinces,—a line of communication, the command of which no foreign invader could seize until in actual possession of the country.

Of the facility of defending Candia less need be said, as it is not only an island, but too large an island to be taken by a mere *coup de main;* and we suspect that the boldest of the French and Russian commanders would pause before they ventured on the task of taking such a post from the conquerors of Trafalgar, aided by *les vainqueurs des vainqueurs d'Austerlitz et de Borodino.* We are no particular believers in any great military genius displayed by the mighty men of war of our time; but we are confident that some intuitive feeling, which the best might not perhaps like to explain, would still bring home the clear conviction to their breasts, that the world in arms might vainly try to wrest the island of Candia from the hands of the British. Ten or fifteen thousand men, with a few armed steam-boats on the Nile, were an ample force for the protection of both countries, as the one is, in some sort, a shield to the other. The Ionian islands might then, as they are of no intrinsic value, be given to Austria.

We now proceed to show the facility with which these countries may be taken possession of. Much has lately been said about the veteran army of Egypt, trained by French officers to European tactics, and flushed with recent victory and conquest. All this sounds, no doubt, mighty well, and is admirably adapted to impose upon a generation that is influenced by sound alone in its most important decisions; being, in the mass, too impatient of labour to enter into any serious investigation, however important, or too vain of the fancied knowledge flatteringly ascribed to it by political adventurers, ever to doubt the accuracy of any opinion it may once have taken up or repeated. The present Egyptian army is composed of men of different sects and races, all hating each other far more than they hate

any external enemy against whom they could be brought to contend. The hostility between the Turks and the Arabs is well known; and both are alike dreaded and disliked by the Copts and other so-called Christians; whilst the Negro is in every situation nothing better than a slave. The modern Egyptians were besides always unwarlike, and constantly ruled by foreign soldiers—Turks, Albanians, or Mamelukes; and society in Egypt cannot now furnish officers sufficient for keeping up the discipline of armies trained on tactical principles. European discipline requires a class of individuals, possessing a sufficient quantity of knowledge, together with so much sense of honour, or so much professional application in pursuit of promotion, as shall fit them for constituting the links of that chain of organization which binds the whole mass of an army together, and makes the entire body act at the bidding of its chief, like a single piece of perfect machinery; such a class of individuals can be taken from the middling and educated ranks of society only; and in Egypt, as in the other countries of the East, there is of course no such class, there are only lords and slaves.

Nor can this deficiency be supplied by European adventurers—men ignorant alike of the language, manners, and customs of the natives, and ranking, from their conduct and character, far too low in general estimation to be obeyed and looked up to by their soldiers. European discipline also exacts from the men who are required to act under its rules, certain qualities and conditions not to be found in the present natives of Egypt. There must be much passive courage, added to confidence in their science, their officers and their government; and there must be also some natural energy of character, which shall enable men to bear up

against the depressing part of the European system, which, so far from making men expert in the use of arms, deprives them of any skill they may naturally possess, and merely teaches them to act together. They must resign all individual confidence in themselves, and trust implicitly in their unknown superiors, and in the equally unknown science of war under which they are to act. And can men who are more than half barbarians be expected to do this, when not kept together by efficient and trustworthy officers—colonels, captains, and subalterns, or what the French would call *de bons cadres?* Their previous victories prove nothing against our assertion: it was not difficult for soldiers who merely acted together, to disperse the rabble armies of Syrian pachas, more favourably inclined towards the usurping rebel than towards their lawful sovereign. It was still easier to rout the plundering bands of Grecian pelicari, who, on the soil of the "unforgotten brave," astounded the world by excesses of cowardice that silenced even the liberal poets of Germany; silenced all but the liberal eloquence of the Stock-exchange. The conquerors of such feeble enemies are not, on the strength of these victories, to be opposed to the soldiers of England; and the fact is, that all who know anything of the Egyptian army, of the character of the Orientals in general, and of the effects of European discipline, are fully convinced that these half-starved, half-clothed warriors of Egypt will disperse of their own accord, on the first appearance of an European force. The Turks of Roumelia and Anatolia are avowedly men of distinguished personal bravery, and many of the gallant blows they struck, when fighting in their own wild manner, amply prove the feebleness of modern tactics. Yet these men, when tactically trained, became, in 1828-29,

the laughing-stock of their enemies; whilst some of the irregular bands performed actions deserving the highest praise and admiration.

Possibly it will be urged, that so bold and decisive a measure as the one here proposed, must, if carried into effect, excite the immediate jealousy of France and Russia, and ultimately, perhaps, plunge the country and Europe into all the horrors of a general war. No doubt, such things may be said, for what is not said in these times? But without at present waiting to ask why Britain should stop short in any career of great and noble aggrandizement, merely because it may possibly be displeasing to the Autocrat on the one side, or the Citizen King on the other, it may be safely asserted, that we should, after all, have little beyond a few diplomatic notes to fear, and those, more probably, of a complimentary than of a threatening nature. France, standing alone on the Continent, more in a position of hostility than of friendship towards the other great states, may, if deprived of our aid, be considered as nearly powerless in Europe; and it is, besides, her interest to keep on good terms with this country, as she has more to hope than to apprehend from us; for it is neither our interest, nor can it be our wish, to injure her: a proposition that every *bon Francois* will, no doubt, think himself patriotically bound to dispute, but which is, nevertheless, self-evident to all men of ordinary capacity on this side of the Channel.

France, by engaging in a contest with Great Britain, could drive us neither from Candia nor from Egypt, but would assuredly call our attention to the *slight breach of promise* of which she has been guilty in retaining Algiers. France would also lose her colonies, her shipping, her commerce, and the millions she annually derives from the folly

of our unpatriotic absentees: and what is more, the French have no longer any wish to encounter the British either in the field, or on the ocean; and surely, if they are satisfied, we have no reason to complain. As to the annexation of Belgium, it will not be immediately attempted in the face of the military power of Austria and Prussia, both very different adversaries now from what they formerly were, and far too formidable to be provoked about the nominal annexation of a mere dependent province, that the first Continental disturbance which shall embroil the Nothern powers will incorporate with the French empire as a matter of course. In taking up a position with a view to bridle the power of Russia, we should rather expect to be aided than thwarted by France, as it is as much her object as ours to curb the giant of the north; and as to Austria and Prussia, we may be certain of their good will, for we should, in fact, be playing their game as well as our own.

That Russia will not evince any particular satisfaction on seeing Britain make the acquisition of such valuable provinces, may be pretty safely taken for granted; and, as far as a few politely threatening diplomatic notes go, she will certainly do her best to dislodge us; but beyond paper pellets, she neither will nor can venture, and for the best reason in the world,—she has no navy capable of contending with us on the ocean, and as to marching a modern Russian army into Egypt, it is as much out of the question as marching such an army to India. But then we shall be told that, in order to counteract our aggression, Russia will immediately take possession of Constantinople and the Dardanelles. On what principle Russia, which, by the terms imposed on Turkey after the war of 1829, broke the faith and honour she had pledged in the face of Europe and

has besides been guilty of so many acts of aggrandizement, could object to our occupying Egypt and Candia, we shall not stop to inquire, well knowing how little Muscovite rulers allow such trifles as right or justice to interfere with the attainment of any political object they may have in view; it would therefore only be a question of expediency with the Autocrat's government, and it seems that it is not yet expedient for Russia to take possession of Constantinople, or we should not just now have had the satisfaction of seeing her withdraw her troops from the shores of the Bosphorus.

That Russia will re-occupy Turkey as soon as she finds herself strong enough to conquer and retain the country is, and long has been, perfectly clear to every man of ordinary capacity in Europe; nor will she wait till we may furnish her with a pretext for so doing, as the Russian government has always a hundred good reasons for going to war with Turkey ready at hand; and their declaration in 1828 shows, that they are not very particular about the choice. Russia will therefore attempt the conquest of Turkey whenever it suits her own time. By quietly sitting down with our hands across, and using our most liberal endeavours to extinguish all the military feelings and aspirations of the British people, we shall certainly not retard the flight of her eagles towards the Hellespont; but by assuming, on the other hand, a strong position in the Levant, we may so far diminish the value of the anticipated conquest, and render the achievement itself altogether so difficult, as to place the attempt beyond the sphere of immediate speculation. If, in 1829, there had been a strong British force stationed in Candia, to say nothing of its being backed by all the resources of Egypt, Diebitsch

would not, without our permission, have advanced to Adrianople; nor would Ibrahim Pacha have lately ventured to Smyrna without our consent: as Candia is a post from whence all the coasts, ports, and lines of communication in the Levant may be easily and successfully assailed.

But allowing the value of the countries specified, what right, it will be asked, have we to appropriate to ourselves these important dominions? This is a question which cannot be argued here;—we are discussing the merits of a military position, and cannot attempt to define the limits of action within which nations have to confine themselves, when their welfare, happiness and independence are at stake.

Nations owe to themselves a duty from which private individuals are exempt: a private gentleman may, with perfect security, behold a neighbour outgrow him in wealth, power and influence, because the law of the land prevents the power of the rich and the strong from being employed for the oppression of the weak. It is not so with nations: they cannot with safety allow themselves to be outgrown in strength by neighbouring states, because the wealth and possessions of the people may be endangered by the power and ambition of aggressive neighbours. There is no law to which nations can appeal: for the law of nations never yet protected the weak, nor checked the aggressions of the strong. This is saying nothing of the natural property which every citizen holds in the power and greatness of his country, the heritage of honour to which he is born, and the preservation of which he has a right to demand from the government under which he lives: when Rome was great and powerful, her simple citizens stood on a level with Kings, and Sovereigns; but

Rome is powerless; and as an influential actor on the great stage of human affairs, the highest of her princes now stand on a lower level than the humblest freeholder of Britain.

At the moment we are writing, France is extending her possessions along the coast of Africa; and the notions of political morality entertained by this most civilized nation of continental Europe,* may be judged of by the fact, that France justifies her deviation from the treaties which bound her to refrain from permanent conquests in that quarter, on the ground that the minister, who signed the obligation, has been banished the French soil, and is no longer recognised as a Frenchman!!! At this rate a nation has only to outlaw a minister in order to annul the most solemn engagement; the new doctrine proves, if further proof were wanting, that nations have nothing to depend upon for security, but their own strength and resources.

Russia, at a greater distance, is acting on a greater scale: forgetful of every sense of honour, of every pledge given at the breaking out of the Turkish war in 1828—when she promised to abstain from all conquest or territorial aggrandizement,—she has appropriated to herself entire provinces in Asia; obtained from the Porte, the cession of Circassia, a country never under the actual dominion of the Sultan,—and is now, without a shadow of right or provocation, reducing the country by force of arms, and enslaving the whole of a free and independent people.

Citizen Kings and despotic Emperors are acting, after

* The amount of knowledge on which civilization can alone be founded is, however, much greater in Germany than in France; but the political situation of the country prevents the scattered rays of light from being brought to a central focus capable of giving them full force and effect.

all, on a small and insignificant scale compared to the liberal and unambitious republic of the West. America, after having fomented a civil-war in Texas, is annexing, or about to annex, by a simple vote of congress, the whole of that empire to her overgrown dominion; for Texas, though termed a province in America, is equal in size to any empire of Europe, Russia alone excepted.

Our former rivals in greatness and power, are thus outgrowing us at every step: new empires are rising around us; and the wars that sprung out of the French revolution, taught all civilized nations to wield, and organize their forces with a quickness and effect, totally unknown half a century ago. Improved modes of communication have also brought them within arm's-length of each other; and though we may at all times be willing to hold out the hand of friendship to our neighbours, it is our duty nevertheless, to maintain our station in the foremost rank of nations, and not to fall behind our former rivals in the career of strength and greatness.

What has been the fate, even in our own day, of the nations that allowed themselves to be outgrown by more formidable neighbours? Genoa and Venice, once influential and independent states, have merged into the dominions of greater powers. Holland and Switzerland acted prominent parts in the affairs of the world: but during the sway of Napoleon they became tributary provinces of his empire, and only recovered a nominal independence; the one to receive the orders of Austria, the other, those of France. Saxony beheld her finest provinces given to Prussia: Denmark, distinguished for the most upright political conduct ever pursued by a Christian country, was robbed of a kingdom by one enemy, and saw her capital given to the

flames by another. The freedom of Poland was quenched in the blood of its slaughtered defenders; while Italy and Germany were forced to send thousands of their sons to slaughter in the train of Napoleon, in order to save their country from being laid waste at the beck of that mean and ignoble despot.

Later still, Spaniards and Italians attempted to improve the forms of their corrupt and despicable governments; and though it may be allowed that neither of these countries possess the elements out of which free institutions can be formed, they were at least independent nations, and by right entitled to settle their internal affairs at their own pleasure: but, though they had the right, they had not the might; for a French army entered one country, and an Austrian army overran the other, and restored the old order of things by means of foreign bayonets. No Christian government had adhered so honourably to all its engagements, as the government of Turkey; but when the Sultan attempted to put down his revolted subjects the Greeks,* liberal Europe forbade the exercise of independent power: an allied squadron destroyed, by one of the most unprincipled acts of aggression ever committed on the sea or the land, the Turkish fleet in the bay of Navarin; and a Russian army invaded Turkey, and advanced to Adrianople. The Greek revolution suited the interest of Russia, and was

* During the Greek revolution the cause of the insurgents was pleaded on the ground of their being the descendants of the ancient Hellenes, our instructors in all the arts of peace and war. But the modern Greeks are not the descendants of the Hellenes; they are the descendants of the Sclavonian tribes, who overran Europe on the fall of the Roman empire; and if a debt of gratitude is due to our earliest instructors, it should be paid to the Egyptians, from whom the ancient Greeks derived their knowledge.

encouraged; but the Spanish and Italian revolutions of 1821, did not suit the interests of France and Austria, and were put down in consequence.

All these acts of aggression, committed by other nations, would not, in themselves, justify us in the commission of the slightest act of the same kind; but they prove that nations must be strong, if they wish to remain independent. We have shown that, in the present situation of public affairs, and, in consequence of the notions of political ethics now existing in the world, a strong military position in the East has become necessary to our interest and permanent security; but how far that necessity may justify us in taking forcible possession of Egypt and Candia, if they could not be acquired by other means, is a question which we are not arguing: we are showing the value of the possessions, and the pressure of the circumstances that call for their occupation: the full weight of the existing pressure we do not decide upon, and leave it to others to draw the exact line between acts of aggression, and the natural right of self-defence, which Providence has given to nations, as well as to individuals.

It must be recollected also, that the question here is not between Britain and Egypt; but between Britain and Mehemet-Ali, an able adventurer, who by treason has taken possession of the country, and holds it by force of arms against the wishes of all those whom chance has made his slaves and subjects. The Egyptian people have long been anxious for the arrival of a Christian, and above all of an English force, that should liberate them from thraldom, and place them under the protection of a civilized government. And the Arab soldiers, kept together by fear and constraint, would be the first to hail the strangers that

should free them from the iron bonds of military duty and wretchedness, and send them back in peace to their homes and villages. Nor has the Pacha himself any claim on our forbearance. He aided to strike down our allies the Turks; he helped, for the gratification of his own ambition, to break down the barrier that still sheltered us from the overgrown power of Russia; he tore from us the shield of safety, and the man who,—when darkling blows are dealt at every turn, robs me of my armour is my foe, and may be dealt with accordingly.

Of the position of Russia in the north, it is less necessary to speak; because, however threatening her attitude, any effort at aggression in that question will be more readily perceived, and must bring her immediately into contact with more firmly established institutions. Since Finland was lost and a stranger placed on the throne of Sweden, the Scandinavian peninsula is little better than a Russian province; and Captain Crawford, of the Navy, who lately saw in the Baltic, a Russian fleet of 26 sail of the line, besides frigates and smaller vessels, all in a perfect state of equipment, and going through their summer manœuvres with four months' provisions, and thirty thousand men on board,—declares that, highly as he thinks of the skill and courage of his countrymen, he could not at the sight, help trembling for their naval superiority. Such a power can only be met by most decisive measures.

It is a good deal the fashion in the present day, to shrink back, with something like pious horror, from the bare allusion to any possibility of war. Ready as we are to do full justice to the generous and humane feelings of the many whose hearts naturally bleed at the prospect of any further suffering being added to the mighty mass of woe that

already afflicts our species, we are nevertheless forced to say, that there is too often a great deal of cant, hypocrisy, ignorance, and a low spirit of avarice, concealed under all this pretended philanthropy. The heartless creditor, who drives entire families to ruin and dishonour by the imprisonment of the father or brother that maintained them; the avaricious landlord, who, under the pretence of improving the country, gives up to sheep the soil that supported men, and forces hundreds of clansmen and tenants from their native glens, in order to augment his own rents; the tyrant manufacturer who fattens on the health-and-life-destroying labour of children; the cruel father that rears up his offspring to vice and dishonour; the coarse and brutal husband, the terror of his home,—are all loud declaimers against war. The callous seducer of innocence, who, when desire is gratified, abandons the victim of his falsehood, her that loved him and confided in him, to a fate more horrible than any other resulting from human crimes and passion, and one that too often transforms to fiends those whom nature had endowed with almost angelic loveliness; the harpy of the law, who fosters the seeds of mischief and prospers on the encouraged vices of his victims; the envious slanderer, before whose breath virtue mourns and beauty fades, as fade the flowers before the pestiferous breath of the simoom,—all shudder, of course, with virtuous indignation at the bare thought of a sword being drawn in honourable hostility, whilst they constantly occasion, by mere cold-hearted selfishness, more real suffering than is ever inflicted by the fiery, but passing, blast of war.

A war of unjust aggression is, no doubt, a crime of the greatest magnitude, because, independently of the injustice

of the act itself, it leads to deeds of violence not to be denied or forgotten by those who were actors or sufferers in such scenes. Deserted towns, villages in flames, women, children, citizens, and peasants, accompanied by a melancholy train of the aged and infirm of both sexes, and all flying from their ruined homes, and seeking protection for themselves and their little property in the rear of friendly armies, or in the dark recesses of rocks and forests; the naked, bloated and unburied corpses of the slain; the young, the beautiful, the brave, struck down or mutilated, in the very pride of hope; and, above all, the appalling wounds, so often inflicted by the cowardly and accursed arms of the moderns, are sights fearfully well calculated to impress themselves on the minds of the beholders, and to furnish subjects for descriptions, and pictures far more vivid and striking than the more frequent, but not less acute, though less romantic, sufferings of every-day life.

But, along with its evils, war calls forth and holds up to admiration and imitation all the courage, energy and high spirit of enterprise of which our nature is capable, and awakens, in the breast of men, a generous sympathy for the sufferings of others,—qualities that the dark and mole-like crimes of peace constantly tend to crush and destroy. The writer of these pages has seen war in its most savage form,—a form in which he hopes it will never be beheld again; but he has no hesitation in declaring that he witnessed during its progress, more generosity, kindliness of feeling, readiness to assist in peril and to relieve in difficulty, displayed by the humble soldiers of the regiment in which he served, than he has ever seen practised by high or low during the many years of peace that have followed.

In war, the greatest quantity of suffering is of a bodily nature, and falls mostly upon the soldiers, who are not

only in the prime of life, and most capable of endurement, but whose bodies are, to a certain extent, hardened by the habit that military men naturally fall into, of contemplating the chances of wounds and mutilation. The injuries inflicted on the peaceful, are comparatively of rare occurrence. And what are bodily sufferings when compared to mental anguish? or what is the pain suffered by the brave from the wounds received in manly and honourable fight, compared to the sorrows every day heaped upon the generous and the good in times of profound peace? What are lacerated limbs, compared to the broken-hearted despair of the virtuous, when mourning over the loss and ruin of those whom they loved? The crimes and cruelties committed before the melancholy cargo of the Amphitrite* could be completed, must have called forth more tears of anguish than were shed for all the blood spilt on the plains of Waterloo.

Poverty is the great cause of crime in this country,—a cause that our feeble and penurious policy is constantly augmenting by impolitic reductions, and by blocking up all outlets to national and individual exertion. Where are the splendid colonies of Java, Martinique, Guadaloupe, and Surinam? Given up to enrich jealous rivals. Where are the thousands of gallant men who captured and helped to retain those valuable possessions? Thrown in poverty on the country, and forced to augment the mass of labour constantly brought to an unprofitable market. Providence has given us the command of the ocean, in order that we might seek, beyond its waves, for wider fields of action than any now afforded within the narrow limits of our islands, and the fault is our own if we do not make use of

* A convict ship, with 300 female convicts on board, who all perished, in the wreck of the vessel near Boulogne, about the time this passage was first written.

the great power bestowed upon us. We must do our best, again to place the means of comfort within the reach of our labouring population, instead of feeding them on the idle theories of the legislators, and political economists, who, by their *unerring* principles, have peopled workhouses and unhealthy manufactories, and levelled to the ground the cottage of the English peasant, the most beautiful structure ever raised by the hands of man.

Since the war closed, we have heard nothing but the cry of reduction, as if a diminution of taxation was in itself an actual augmentation of national wealth, instead of being, as it is, a mere transfer of money from the tax-payer (and every man in the country is, according to his means, a tax-payer) to the tax-receiver. A diminution of taxes, that should leave the amount reduced in the pocket of the payer, without, at the same time, diminishing the income of the tax-receiver, would no doubt, be a distinct and very pleasant augmentation of wealth; but a reduction that must deprive one set of persons, mostly of the poorer classes, of the whole or part of their revenue, in order that the money may remain in the pockets of individuals who are generally in far better circumstances, is already a very different affair, for its only certain result is to augment the number of the poor for the good of the rich.

In a country like Britain, in which the constant tendency of wealth is to run to masses instead of dividing; where there are so many persons of boundless fortune; and where the affluent, to say nothing of the prospering, are so numerous, whilst the poor and actually destitute may, on the other hand, be counted by millions; where the chasm between the poor and wealthy classes is so dangerous and so wide,—taxation, even to a high amount, is a benefit rather than an evil,—for, if well regulated, it should take from the

wealthy in order to give to the non-wealthy; not, of course, as miserable alms, but in the shape of pay, salary and reward for services rendered to the state for the benefit of the community at large. It must always be fairly understood, that the salaries and rewards thus given to public servants and functionaries, are their rightful share of the general wealth of the country, as such wealth can only be raised and collected by their aid and under their protection. The number of persons to be so employed must, of course, be regulated by the government according to the wants and means of the state; but were we, on the strength of this right, to disband a sufficient number of soldiers, sailors, clerks, and dock-yard labourers to enable us to repeal three millions of taxes to-morrow, there is not a single labouring man in the three kingdoms who would derive one perceptible grain of benefit from the measure, though thousands would be added to the number of those who already suffer from inadequate employment.

Men of large fortune, who inhabit princely palaces, would probably derive benefit from such a repeal; the wine-growers of Gascony and Champagne, together with the hotel-keepers of Paris and Florence, where such sums of British money are so virtuously spent, would profit in an equal degree; but the British poor, on whose behalf these measures are always pleaded, would look in vain for their share of the spoil. And the number of sufferers would, in the present state of the revenue, very far exceed the number of gainers: and government must legislate not for the few, but for the many.

The poor, who pay few or no taxes, cannot be benefited by a reduction of taxation, and reductions of establishments naturally overwhelm them; but the rich, who are gainers by the reduction, call for it in the name of the poor;

speculative popularity-hunters naturally repeat the cry, and weak ministers, whether Whigs or Tories, incapable of facing even the ordinary clamour raised by professed agitators, yield, step by step, to these demands! thus constantly augmenting, instead of diminishing, the evil complained of. We prospered during the war, not certainly in consequence of the blood that was shed, nor of the gunpowder that was expended, but simply because there was plenty of employment and a fair reward for active exertion; but British artisans and labourers are now obliged to toil late and early, as no men under the sun ever toiled before, merely in order to obtain a precarious and scanty livelihood. When serving in the West Indies, the writer of this paper had for a time, some colonial negroes under his charge, and can safely assert that the hardest work ever performed by slaves, in those colonies, is mere child's play compared to what a free-born Englishman is now forced to go through in order to earn his bread, and that too in time of profound peace, and under the government of a party, whose accession to power was to ensure the immediate return of the Golden Age.

It is usual for a numerous set of politicians to assert that the country prospered during the war, because we then monopolized the trade of the world, which other nations now share along with us; whereas the fact is, that our trade has been infinitely greater since the peace than it was, or possibly could be during the war, when nearly the whole of the continent was closed against us. We had, during the war, the trade to our own and to our conquered colonies; to North America; not to dwell on the short interruption that took place, to the Levant, together with a precarious and uncertain intercourse with the Baltic and the Scandinavian peninsula. No part of this trade, except

to the restored islands, has been forfeited by the peace; we retain, of course, the monopoly of our own colonies, and have yet hardly any competition to dread in the other countries; so that we can have sustained but little loss from the exertions of our rivals, whilst the countries opened since the peace take from us three times the amount of all that our war-trade with *foreigners* was worth. These countries are Germany, Holland, Belgium, Italy, Denmark, and the South American republics. And yet, in the face of these acknowledged facts, for which parliamentary documents, too long to be inserted here, are our authority, we are constantly laying the evil effects of our feeble policy to the charge of our diminished trade; a trade that is much greater than it was during the war, though far less profitable, because all the active exertions of the countries are thrown into the same channels, that soon get choked up when no new outlets for industry and enterprise are opened. Perhaps we shall be told that war would again deprive us of the very advantages of which we are here boasting; but it is not so,—for a war with France or Russia would only deprive us of the trade of those nations, and neither of them are customers worth retaining, as they purchase nothing from this country.

The people of Britain demand at the hands of their rulers employment and reward for exertion; the country at large, together with all the nations of Western Europe, call loudly for protection against the further aggrandizement of Russia;—for some decisive and vigorous step, that shall give a promise of manly resistance to future aggression; and both these objects may, to a certain extent, be obtained by the measure we have ventured to propose.

But independently of the advantages it holds out, we confess that we are anxious to secure for our country the glory

that would result from so bold and decided a step. To rebuild, by the steady pursuits of industry, the hundred cities of Crete;—to call from their ruins the splendid temples of Egypt, and to dedicate those magnificent structures to a purer and more lasting worship than the one to which they owe their origin;—to carry arts, commerce, and civilization along the valley of the Nile into the heart of Christian Abyssinia, and ultimately, perhaps, into the very centre of Africa; and lastly, to open a safe and short communication with India, in order to bring those boundless and almost invaluable countries within the immediate reach of support and improvement,—are measures worthy of a free and enlightened people, ready to employ, in forwarding the great cause of human happiness, the mighty means placed by the hand of Providence at their disposal. The national policy of Britain should be guided by the principle of Alexander, who, according to Arrian, "recognized no limits to the labours of high-spirited men, but the failure of adequate objects," and these can certainly not be wanting as long as the power of Russia remains unchecked, and while Candia and Egypt continue in barbarism, under the usurping rule of an Eastern despot.

"*La nation ou l'état,*" says Vatel (liv. I. chap. ii.) "*a droit à tout ce qui peut lui servir pour d'étourner un peril menaçant, et pour eloigner des choses capable de causer sa ruine; et cela par les mêmes raisons qui etablissent son droit aux choses nécessaires à sa conservation.*" A great danger threatens us, in the power, ambition, and aggressive spirit of Russia; and the question is, how can it be averted, unless by the occupation of Egypt and Candia?

LONDON:
Printed by Manning and Smithson, Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row.

Digitized with financial assistance from
Shri Brihad Bhartiya Samaj
on 31 October, 2019